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The American University in Cairo  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

# **The Legal Methodology of the Salafi Movement in Egypt**

A Thesis Submitted to  
The Department of Arab and Islamic Civilization  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of Master of Arts

By  
**Brian Wright**

Under the supervision of **Dr. Mohamed Serag**

**June / 2012**

The American University in Cairo

# **The Legal Methodology of the Salafi Movement in Egypt**

A Thesis Submitted by

**Brian Wright**

To the Department

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
The degree of Master of Arts

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## **ABSTRACT**

The American University in Cairo

### **The Legal Methodology of the Salafi Movement**

By: Brian Wright

Supervisor: Dr. Mohamed Serag

This study derives the legal methodology of the modern Salafi movement in Egypt. The first two sections develop context, pondering global Salafism as well as the effects of the Egyptian political, economic, and cultural spheres on the movement's development, while the third section discusses the legal opinions of Salafi preachers in the fields of democracy, law, economics, women's rights, non-Muslims, Al Azhar, the Shi'a, as well as the arts and leisure. Section four synthesizes these opinions to create the general approach of the movement to Islamic Law.

This study suggests that each manifestation of Salafism is the result of local circumstances, and not part of a global movement. In Egypt, the failures of Nasserism and capitalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century resulted in calls for a return to Islam, particularly following the 1967 war. Influenced by political Islam as well as Saudi Wahhabism, this group of young preachers would grow over the next thirty years to re-define the country's religious landscape.

The legal methodology of the Salafi movement is one of selective literalism of the Qur'ān and Sunna, without a defined framework such as that of *Usūl al Fiqh*. There is an emphasis on issues of theology and a lack of understanding of modern politics and economics. This creates a disconnection with issues on the ground and causes instability in the movement as they increase their political participation. However, a sense of malleability in legal rulings allows the movement to adapt to changing political conditions and provides a method to remain relevant.

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## INTRODUCTION

"إِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ وَ أَحْسَنَ الْهُدَى هُدَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا وَكُلُّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ."

"Verily the truest speech is the Book of God, and the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad. The most evil of all things are novelties, and every novelty is an innovation, and every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance leads to the Fire."<sup>1</sup>

The above statement represents the opening lines of the religious speeches, public lessons, and lectures given by a movement of Egyptian Muslims who refer to themselves as Salafis. Classified in the media as some of the most conservative and observant individuals in the country, the movement has often been the subject of serious debate and criticism.

Interest in the Salafī movement has continued to increase particularly in light of their unexpected success in the 2011-2012 parliamentary elections. During this electoral cycle, which was their first official participation in the country's electoral process, the largest representation of the Salafī Movement, the Al Nour Party, achieved approximately 25% of available seats during three rounds. This solidified the Salafis as the second-largest political movement in Egypt after the Muslim Brotherhood and represented a

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1 The only narration of this Hadith is found in Aḥmad ibn Shu'aib ibn 'Alī ibn Baḥr al Nasā'ī, *Sunan al Nasā'ī* (Aleppo, Syria: Maktab al Maṭbū'āt al Islāmiyya) Vol 3, Book 19 Salāt al 'Eidain, Chapter 22 Kayf al Khuṭba, Ḥadīth 1578.

However, similar narrations are found in

- Muslim ibn al Ḥajjāj al Qushayrī al Nisābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Cairo: Dār Ihīyā' al Kutub al 'Arabiyya, 1991) Book Jum'a Prayer, Ḥadīth 1427, and

- Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al Qazwīnī, *Sunan ibn Mājah* (Riyadh: Maktabat al Ma'ārif) Book Al Muqaddama, Chapter Al Tamassuk bi al-Sunna, Ḥadīth 42 and

- *Ibid.*, Chapter Ijtināb al Bid'a, Ḥadīth 44 and 45, and

- Abu Dāwūd Sulaymān ibn al Asha'th, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (Riyadh: Maktabat al Ma'ārif, 1996) Book Al Sunna, Chapter Fi Luzūm al Sunna, Ḥadīth 3973, and

- Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* (Cairo: al-Maknaz al-Islāmī) Musnad Jāber ibn 'Abd Allah, Ḥadīth 14458 and 15112.

recognition of their significant influence not only in the religious but political spheres as well.

During and after the electoral process, Salafi candidates and the religious leaders who support the movement have begun to re-shape the country's political atmosphere and drive the popular debate. They are calling for Egypt in its new constitution to be defined as an Islamic state, rejecting calls by most other political and religious groups in the country, including the official Al Azhar, for Egypt to be a civil state with an Islamic identity.<sup>2</sup> Critical to an Islamic state according to the Salafi movement is the application of Shari'a or Islamic Law, particularly its more violent aspects such as the *Hudūd* punishments. It is this call to change Egypt's future that has garnered the most powerful responses from opponents of the Salafis and has turned the local media and academic landscape towards seeking a deeper understanding of the movement.

Criticism of the Salafi movement has been vast, particularly in the days following the January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 popular protests and the subsequent political upheaval. Academic conferences,<sup>3</sup> written works,<sup>4</sup> and television programs<sup>5</sup> have all made their contribution, and the Salafis themselves have enhanced their organization to respond to and articulate their own thoughts in this new atmosphere.

However, much of the discussion of the Salafi Movement has been directed at secluded outward issues that although concern many liberal Egyptians, fail to provide a comprehensive look at the movement. For example, many popular television shows have

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2 Ibrahim Bayūmī Ghānim, “Wathīqat al-Azhar: Al-Naṣ wa al-Naṣr,” Al Ahrām, 9 July 2011, accessed 8 Apr 2012, <http://www.ahram.org.eg/Issues-Views/News/99869.aspx>.

3 Most conferences have not dealt with the Salafi issue directly, but have provided a number of criticisms to the goals of the movement, particularly post-2011 Revolution. See the International Conference on “Sufism: A Fundamental Methodology for Reform” (التصوف: منهج أصيل للإصلاح) held in Cairo from 24-26 September 2011 at the Al Azhar International Conference Center.

4 The most popular of these works that has tackled the Salafi approach with applications has been Muḥammad al Ghazālī, *Al Sunna al Nabawiyya: Bayn Ahl al-Fiqh wa Ahl al-Ḥadīth* (Cairo, Dār El Shorouk: 2006). For a more modern work, see 'Ali Juma', *Al Mutashaddidūn* (Cairo: Dār al Muqattam, 2011).

5 See the show “Al Majlis” on the Egyptian satellite channel “Al Azharī”: <http://azharitv.net/index/splash>



highlighted the Salafi rejection of bikinis and claim that a ban on this beachwear will have a negative effect on tourism. Other examples of the criticism of Salafism has been on the veiling requirements for women or the growing of the beard and wearing of traditional robes with raised leggings for men. This approach is specifically directed towards the Salafi tendency to mix between individual and organizational, moral and legal issues.

This study seeks to depart from the traditional approach to analyzing the Salafi movement as either an ignorant group of Muslims or simply unwanted extremists and begin to chart a deeper understanding of what the Salafi movement in Egypt represents. This will be done through an analysis of the works of the Salafi movement. As a corridor for understanding, this study uses the modern legal opinions of prominent Salafi speakers. From an analysis of these opinions, the goal of this study is to extract the principles that constitute the methodology of the modern Salafi movement in Egypt.

### **Research Methodology**

As will be described in Chapter 2 of this study, the Salafi Movement in Egypt can be divided into four different categories. The first two are divided by time: those who founded the modern movement in the 1970s and received the majority of their education abroad or those whose popularity increased in the 1990s and began teaching in the 2000s with significantly reduced foreign experience. Additionally, within each generation there are two general groups into which preachers can be classified: those who are associated with official Salafi organizations such as the *Da'wa Salafiyya* in Alexandria and those who speak independently. In order to provide as wide a spectrum as possible of Salafi opinions in Egypt, an effort was made to draw speakers from each of these four classifications.

It was the original intention of this study to conduct personal interviews with each Salafi preacher selected from the four groups above. The proper ethical approval was obtained from the university administration and questionnaires were prepared

accordingly. However, as time progressed it became clear that the preachers chosen for this study were not interested in participating. They did not respond to repeated attempts at personal contact, nor could an alternative method of communication be found through their students or acquaintances. As a result, in order to present relevant and recent material for the analysis of legal opinions, a decision was made to utilize new media sources.

### **A Note on Sources**

In order to provide the most accurate picture possible of the modern Salafi movement in Egypt, this study utilizes as many different sources available including YouTube, internet sites, and recordings of public lectures, alongside printed works. This method of presentation is relatively new in the field of Islamic Studies, and therefore it is necessary to present a limited justification of how these resources were used.<sup>6</sup>

1. The Salafi movement is based upon popularity, and is a direct reflection of Egyptian society. From the issues covered in their debates, to their relationship with the state and even the backgrounds of the most prominent Salafi speakers, catering to their audience is critical for the movement's survival. Therefore, the methods used in communication for the Salafi movement must be those that can easily reach the largest audience possible, hence the use of new media.
2. Much of the Egyptian political, cultural, and religious landscape is currently being re-defined through the use of new media outlets including satellite channels, recorded lectures in mosques and in the streets, conferences, and the Internet.<sup>7</sup> The Salafi movement is no exception to this trend and actively uses these new methods as the primary avenues through which they communicate to the public. Although printed works are available, these are usually geared towards a more

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<sup>6</sup> It is the intention of the researcher to further expand on the validity of new media sources such as social networks and YouTube in later work.

<sup>7</sup> Lina Khatib, "Communicating Islamic Fundamentalism as Global Citizenship," in *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 27, 4, October 2003, 389 – 409.

academic audience and are limited in scope, with very few supporters of the movement actively reading their printed materials.

3. Finally, there have been significant changes in the political power structure in Egypt following the 2011 Revolution. During this period, the Salafi movement entered politics for the first time and began exerting an entirely new dimension of influence on the country's discourse. This has been too recent, however, to allow many Salafis to articulate their opinions in published works. For example, the *Majlis Shūrā al Ulemā'*, a collection of Salafi preachers who have come together to create a more unified voice in their rulings, have posted all of their information online and have held most of their meetings live on satellite channels, making citations of their opinions only available through these sources.

For YouTube specifically, One of the primary concerns of utilizing it as a medium such is the ability of the uploader to cut recordings and take messages out of their context to promote a particular opinion, placing the status of videos from the site as primary sources into question. When approaching YouTube, this study uses videos that have either been uploaded by official Salafi sources such as satellite channels (Al Nas, Al Raḥma, or al Ḥikma, or Ḥāfez), websites such as AnaSalafy.com or SalafVoice which are connected to the *Da'wa Salafiyya* in Alexandria. In cases where these videos are not available from their official sources, videos of full episodes uploaded by individuals were sought.

Search terms used to find particular rulings were typically the name of the ruling requested followed by the preacher. For example, searching in the field of women's rights and the niqab debate, the search terms would be “Ḥukm al-Ḥijāb Muḥammad Ḥassān” or “Ḥukm al-Niqāb Muḥammad Ḥassān.”<sup>8</sup>

## Roadmap

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8 The actual Arabic text entered as the search term would be:

“حكم الحجاب محمد حسان، حكم النقاب محمد حسان”

Before the movement in Egypt can be understood, it is important to begin with the construction of a global context. Salafism, as many studies have previously mentioned, is not a movement isolated to Egypt, nor is it the product of individuals writing solely in the 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. It is therefore necessary to understand the origins of Salafism and how this term has been used by different groups of Muslims throughout history. Is Salafism an independent doctrine with roots dating back to the first generations following the Prophet Muḥammad, expressing the one true representation of Islam? Or is it a response to the theological discussions of later generations of Muslims who were influenced by Greek philosophy?

Unfortunately, the time and space limitations of this study do not allow for a complete discussion of this subject, nor to provide an exhaustive look at the use of Salafism throughout the fourteen centuries of Islam. Rather, the first section of this study seeks to provide a simple historical connection and global context to what is occurring in Egypt and begin to understand what Salafism is in general.

The second section of this study will then construct the national context in which the Salafi movement grew, particularly in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> and first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This section will explore the political, cultural, social, and economic changes that occurred during this period around which the modern Salafi movement developed, attempting to answer the question of under what circumstances did the Salafi movement arise. At the end of the second section, a brief biographical sketch will be provided of some major living members of the Salafi movement, charting their background, education, and social status as well as their current place in the movement.

After providing the context of the Salafi movement and describing some of its prominent figures, the third section of this study then charts their modern legal opinions. These opinions will be provided in the fields of democracy and the nature of the state, application of Islamic Law or Shari'a, the foundations of the Islamic economic system and banking, women's rights, the place of non-Muslims in the state, the position and role

of Al Azhar, the approach to the Shi'a, and opinions regarding the arts and leisure activities.

Following these opinions, the fourth section of the study will then present a sketch of the methodology of the Salafi movement. What scholars had the most influence in their thought? How do they present their ideas to the public, using what sources and methods? And where do they see themselves in opposition to the rest of society?

### **Note on Transliteration**

This study utilizes the standard Arabic transliteration methods throughout with one major exception: in situations where an author has publications in English, the popular transliteration of the name will be provided. Examples of this exception include Yusuf al Qaradawi and Fahmy Huweidy.

## CHAPTER 1:

### Defining Salafism

Starting from a linguistic point of view, the word *Salaf* in Arabic literally means that which precedes, such as the front lines of a military.<sup>9</sup> Religiously, the word is used referring to the previous generations of Muslims. This meaning can be general or, in more modern contexts, refer to the first three generations of Islam after the Prophet Muḥammad: the Companions, their Followers, and the Followers of the Followers. The term *Salaf* is often placed in opposition to the term *Khalaf*, which linguistically is defined as what is behind<sup>10</sup> and religiously as any later generation of Muslims, particularly after these three.

However, this issue is not simply one of linguistics, but rather goes to the core of religious beliefs. Writers considered major figures in the Salafī movement such as Nāṣir al Dīn al-Albānī argued that the first three generations of Muslims represent a pure form of the religion, before Muslim society was exposed to the ideas of philosophy that caused divisions within the society. They had their own system of belief and practice, that was based solely on the direct interpretation and understanding of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic Traditions, or *Sunna*. This practice represented the only correct version of Islam, and should be followed by all.<sup>11</sup> The official religious body of Saudi Arabia has also issued a ruling which states that Salafis are all those who follow the path of the first generations of Muslims, and therefore are on the only correct path of Islam.<sup>12</sup>

### Use throughout History

Unfortunately, even according to sources of those defending Salafism, there is no clear definition or presence of Salafism from the original sources of Islam.<sup>13</sup> There are no

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9 Muḥammad ibn Mukarram ibn Mandhūr, *Lisān al- 'Arab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir) 9, 158.

10 Ibn Mandhūr 9, 82.

11 'Amr 'Abd al-Mun'eim Selīm, ed, *Al-Masā'il al-'Ilmiyya wa al-Fatāwa al-Shar'iyya* (Tanta: Dār al-Diā', 2006) 29 - 30.

12 *Fatāwa al-Lajna al-Dā'ima*, Vol 2, P 243, Number 1361, accessed 12 Feb 2012, <http://www.alifta.net/Fatawa/FatawaChapters.aspx?View=Page&PageID=611&PageNo=1&BookID=3>.

13 Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al Maghrāwī, *Al-Maṣādir al-'Ilmiyya fī al-Difā' 'an al-'Aqida al-*

Qur'ānic verses that mention such a division and there is only one Hadith quoted by Salafi sources that specifically mentions the subject.<sup>14</sup> However, it should be noted that this Hadith refers specifically to the memorization and relation of the Qur'ān, and has nothing to do with a division in the Muslim community. If Salafism existed from the early stages of Islamic history, it would require more time to develop, and that “information had to be sifted, Hadiths and reports had to be assessed and, ultimately, subjective choices had to be made.”<sup>15</sup> Therefore, this could not have been done by the first few generations and had to have arisen much later, once the Muslim world had become exposed to alternative methods of thought.

Another popular explanation of the roots of Salafism is through the movement's apparent attachment to the Hadith as presented by modern scholars such as Muḥammad ‘Imāra.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, it is argued, the first Salafis were members of the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*. These scholars, who were based in the early regional schools of Islam such as Medina, arguably preferred an attachment to the Hadith and the examples of the Companions for the derivation of their law and beliefs, staunchly opposing their counterparts or the *Ahl al-Ra’y* who favored the application of independent judicial reasoning.<sup>17</sup> This division became more pronounced as the writing of Traditions became more popular and was influenced by Muslim attempts to elevate the status of the Hadith. Eventually a distinction was made in the Abbasid Period, during the development of the ‘*Ulamā*’ class and the expansion of theological and philosophical discourse. Scholars such as school founders al Shāfi‘ī and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal would elaborate on the idea, but it would eventually reach its peak at the crystallization of the Hanbali school in the 4<sup>th</sup> century of

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*Salafiyya* (Riyad: Dār al-Rāya, 1996).

14 “...So fear God and be patient, for I am the best predecessor for you...”

“...فَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَاصْبِرْ فَإِنِّي نَعَمُ السَّلَفُ أَنَا لَكَ...”

- Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al Bukhārī, *Al Jāmi’ al Ṣaḥīḥ* (Cairo: Maṭābi’ al-Amīriyya, 1312) Vol 8, P 64, Book al Isti’dhān, Chapter Man Najā bayn Yaday al Nās, and

- Muslim, Vol 4, P 1904, Book al Faḍā’il, Chapter Faḍā’il Fāṭima bint al Nabī, Ḥadīth 98.

15 Henri Lauziere, *The Evolution of the Salafiyya in the Twentieth Century through the Life and Thought of Taqī al-Dīn al Hilālī* (Dissertation to Georgetown University, 2008) 36.

16 Muḥammad ‘Imāra, *Izālat al Shubuhāt ‘an Ma‘ānī al Muṣṭalahāt* (Cairo: Dār al-Salām, 2009) 31-43.

17 *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. “Ra’y (a.),” accessed 04 April 2012, [http://www.brillonline.nl.library.aucegypt.edu:2048/subscriber/entry?entry=islam\\_SIM-8869](http://www.brillonline.nl.library.aucegypt.edu:2048/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_SIM-8869).

the Hijra / 10<sup>th</sup> century CE<sup>18</sup>. However, this argument appears to be equally vague, with some even arguing that Salafis are rather remnants of a rogue Hanafi sect strongly attached to the Hadith<sup>19</sup>. However, these opinions show a great deal of confusion and a lack of understanding amongst modern scholars.

Salafī defenders have conducted their own research as to the origins of Salafism. By conducting this process, they are attempting to create a chain of Salafī scholars back to the earliest generations of Muslims, which would lend a much greater level of legitimacy for their movement. Some, for example, quote Al Sam'ani (d. 562 Hijra / 1167 CE) in his *Al Ansāb*, claiming that he makes a mention of a group known as the *Salaf*.<sup>20</sup> However, upon looking at the source, the quote that numbers no more than a few lines states very vaguely “This is a reference to the *Salaf* and the association to their school of thought, or so I have heard.”<sup>21</sup> Others will argue that some of the earliest scholars of Islam were in fact Salafī, such as the four Imams of Sunni Jurisprudence<sup>22</sup>, 'Abd al-Razāq Al Ṣan'ānī (126 – 211 Hijra / 744 – 827 CE), Ibn Abī Shayba (159 – 235 Hijra / 775 – 849 CE), and the writers of all six major Hadith collections.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, during this process of legitimization, other works and a number of websites defending Salafism make reference to scholars that are little-known in academic circles such as Abu Naṣr al-Sajazī (d. 444 Hijra / 1052 CE).<sup>24</sup> Very little is known about the life of this individual and only one work attributed to him: a letter to the people of Zubayd regarding the status of the Qur'ān, has been published in Saudi Arabia.<sup>25</sup> He is reported to have written another

18 Wael B. Hallaq, “Hanbali School of Law.” In *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa*, edited by Philip Mattar (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2004).

19 Aḥmad Zaghlūl Shalāṭa. *Al Hāla al Salafiyya al Mu'āsira fī Miṣr*. (Cairo: Madboulī, 2011) 31-32.

20 “Statements from the Salaf on Ascription to the Salaf,” Salafi Publications, last modified 10 Jun 1998, accessed 4 April 2012, <http://www.salafipublications.com/sps/>, article ID: SLF10001.

21 Abī Sa'd 'Abd al-Karīm ibn Muḥammad al Ṣan'ānī, *Al Ansāb* (Beirut: Dār al-Janān, 1988) 3, 273:

"السلفي: بفتح السين واللام، وفي آخرها الفاء. هذه النسبة إلى السلف وانتحال مذهبهم على ما سمعت"

22 Abū Hanīfa, Mālik Ibn Anas, Al Shāfi'ī, and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.

23 The writers of the six Hadith collections are: Al Bukhārī, Muslim, Al Nasā'ī, Abu Dāwūd, Al Tirmidhī, and Ibn Mājah; Al Magrāwī, 13-32.

24 “Abu Naṣr al Sajazī,” ‘Aqīdat al Salaf al Ṣāliḥ, last modified 31 May 2009, accessed 6 March 2012, <http://www.as-salaf.com/article.php?aid=35&lang=ar/>.

25 Abu Naṣr al Sajazī, *Risāla ila Ahl Zubayd fī al Radd 'ala man Ankara al Ḥarf wa al Ṣawt* (Riyadh: Dār al Rāya, 1993).



major work on Islamic theology, the *Ibāna Kubrá*, however no printed edition has appeared and this study has been unable to locate any reference to the work in the Brockelmann catalogue.

What these studies tend to miss, however, is that the use of the idea “*Salaf*” stretches far beyond these random citations, and in fact the term was used extensively by other groups of Muslims as well and not just those opposed to *kalām* schools. At the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> Century of the Hijra Abū Hāmid Al Ghazālī in his famous work of spirituality, *Iḥiyā’ ‘Ulūm al Dīn*, frequently makes strong general references to the *Salaf*, backing each principle he introduces with a connection to what the previous generations of Muslims believed or practiced. Most of these references are without specific mentions of a particular person or group of individuals. In his introduction, he clearly references the first three generations of Muslims:

“As for the knowledge of the path that leads to the Afterlife and what the Righteous *Salaf* followed from what God Almighty called in his book deep understanding, wisdom, knowledge, enlightenment, light, salvation, and guidance, has become among the Creation dissolved and forgotten.”<sup>26</sup>

Another writer, Shams al Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Mālik al Daylamī (died after 589 Hijra / 1193 AD) wrote a work validating the chains of Sufism through the use of the term *Salaf*.<sup>27</sup>

### **The “Founders” of Salafism**

After the founding centuries of Islam, most Salafī works tend to base their opinions on the works of one particular individual: Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm ibn Taymiyya (661 – 728 Hijra / 1263 – 1328 CE). According to Salafī writers, particularly for our purposes those who represent the movement in Egypt, the conclusions reached by

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26 Abi Hāmid Muḥammad al Ghazālī, *Iḥiyā’ ‘Ulūm al Dīn* (Kiryat Futra) 3.

27 Shams al Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Mālik al Daylamī, *Sharḥ al-Anfās al Rawḥāniyya li-A’imat al Salaf al Ṣufiyya* (Sri Lanka: Dār Al Athar, 2006).

Ibn Taymiyya created Salafism, and that his was the first serious attempt to reclaim the religion from those who had corrupted it.<sup>28</sup> His writings strongly attacked the position of mystics and philosophers, accusing them of straying from the truth of Islam. However, Ibn Taymiyya in only a small section of his large collection of Fatwas does he make a reference to an attachment to the first generations of Islam or what could be vaguely defined as Salafism.<sup>29</sup> Immediately following Ibn Taymiyya in his importance is his student, Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (691 – 751 Hijra / 1292 – 1349 CE). He largely advocated the same principles of his teacher and argued against the positions of the philosophers.

Neither of these individuals, however, makes any clear distinctions that they are themselves Salafi nor that there is a difference between the Salafi movement and the rest of Islam. Their arguments were part of traditional debates between Muslim scholars of theology. What drove both of these writers to take such strong positions in their debates was the historical context in which they wrote. Both Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn al-Qayyim were contemporaries to the destruction of the Mongol invasion as well as the Crusades. These wars resulted in deep divisions in the Muslim society that pushed these writers to derive the opinions that they promoted.<sup>30</sup>

## Reform Movements

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the picture of the Muslim community had changed significantly, and a number of new figures appeared, by far the most widely-discussed and controversial is Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (1703 – 1792). Born into the Najd region of what is today central Saudi Arabia, he obtained his education through traditional means and eventually led a campaign across the Arabian Peninsula to rid the Muslims by force of what he referred to as *shirk*. His seminal set of works, which consist

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28 “Bid’a and Its Influence on the Tribulations of the Muslims.” Recorded tape of a lecture given by Abu Ishāq al-Ḥuwainī.

29 Taqī al Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Halīm ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū'at Fatāwa* (Riyadh: King Fahd Qur’ānic Press, 2004) 4:1.

30 ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad Jār al Nabī, *Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyya wa Juhuduhu fi al Difā' 'an 'Aqīdat al Salaf*. Doctoral dissertation to the College of Shari'a, Umm Al Qura University, Saudi Arabia, 1984.

of a set of short letters that have been gathered together by his followers known as the *Risā'il al Tawhīd*, describe what further explanatory texts would call the pure version of Islam<sup>31</sup>, expressed usually in no more than a few short Qur'ānic verses and Prophetic Traditions.

'Abd al-Wahhāb's mission began to gather momentum after creating a pact with the Al Saud clan. This alliance and new political backing would allow the Wahhabi movement to spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula, and even make short incursions as far north as Karbala in Iraq. This movement, although eventually put down by Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt in 1818<sup>32</sup>, would continue to develop in the desert villages. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the alliance between the Saud and 'Abd al-Wahhāb families would come to prominence again and, along with significant British and American help<sup>33</sup>, form the backbone for the Saudi monarchy which stands to this day.

In India, Shah Walī Allāh al Dahlawī (1703 – 1762) called for a removal of the divisions within the Muslim community and that they should unite under what he called a “banner of truth.” Born into a family that traced its roots to the family of the Prophet Muḥammad, he received his religious education primarily at the hands of his father until his death when al Dahlawī was only sixteen. He then later traveled to the Hijaz to perform pilgrimage, spending two years studying Hadith in the region between 1143 and 1145 Hijra, or approximately 1730 – 1732 CE.<sup>34</sup>

Al Dahlawi's two-volume *Ḥujjat Allāh al Bāligha* or the Convincing Evidence From God describes in detail the greater purposes of God's Law and calls people to turn away from practices of *shirk*, or the association of partners with God.<sup>35</sup> This law, or the *Shari'a*, is seen by al Dahlawi as perfect and covers every possible aspect of life, leaving

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31 Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Kitāb al Tawhīd* (Riyadh: Dār Aṭlas al Khuḍrā, 2012).

32 'Ali Muḥammad Muḥammad al Ṣallābī. *Al Dawla al 'Uthmāniyya*. (Cairo: Dār al Fajr, 2004) 419-422.

33 Sāmi Qāsim Amīn al Malījī, *Al Wahābiyya* (Cairo: Madboulī, 2008) 22.

34 Shāh Walī Allāh al Dahlawī, *Ḥujjat Allāh al Bāligha*. Introduction by Marcia K. Hermansen (Cairo: Dār al Kutub al Ḥadītha, 1966) K – L.

35 *Ibid.*, 124.

no room for other types of secular, and divisive, legal systems.<sup>36</sup> The introduction, written by prominent Muslim Brotherhood scholar Sayyid Sābiq,<sup>37</sup> states that one of the main reasons Islam failed to spread heavily in India is that many of the scholars who taught in the country were polluted by foreign ideas such as Greek philosophy.<sup>38</sup> This work continues to be used as a primary text in Indian religious schools and retains a large popular following across the Muslim world, including at least four separate printings in Egypt.

In Nigeria, another movement was started by Usman dan Fodio, known in Arabic as 'Uthmān ibn Fūdī (1754 – 1817). At the heart of his most popular work, *Bayān Wujūb al Hijra 'ala al 'Ibād*, he establishes the fact that many of the regions of modern-day Nigeria are ruled by non-Muslim princes, and therefore all true Muslims must heed the call of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic Sunna to leave these places,<sup>39</sup> establishing their own community which would ultimately be under his leadership. The resulting population movement and religious revival would change the face and social makeup of the country as well as surrounding African nations. Although researchers have stated that this movement was based primarily on the principles of Sufism such as that of al Dahlawi, recalling 'Uthman's upbringing and his connections to the Qadiriya sect,<sup>40</sup> his primary focus is on innovation in the religion or *bid'a*. He claimed that some areas of the country continued to follow unorthodox practices such as receiving blessings from trees and rocks even though there is a Muslim majority in these regions.<sup>41</sup>

In Yemen Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al Shawkānī (1759 – 1834), born a Zaydi Shi'a but eventually moved to Sunni Islam, led another reform movement set in the midst of

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36 *Ibid.*, 9 - 11.

37 Sayyid Sābiq, although not a Salafi himself, is mentioned heavily as an influence of the modern Salafi movement in Egypt, and an elaboration of this influence is provided at the beginning of Chapter 3.

38 *Ibid.*, Y.

39 'Uthmān ibn Fūdī, *Bayān Wujūb al Hijra 'ala al 'Ibād* (Khartoum and Oxford: Khartoum and Oxford University Press, 1978) Bilingual Edition, from introduction to Arabic Edition, 13-14.

40 *Ibid.*, Introduction to English Edition, 4-5.

41 *Ibid.*, Introduction to English Edition, 16 – 21.

conflicts between the weakened Qasimi Imamate and the Zaydis.<sup>42</sup> Based on the re-introduction of intellectual reasoning or *ijtihād*, he believed strongly that blindly imitating rulings without knowing their underlying textual evidence was forbidden. He was also a strong textualist, rejecting many of the traditional concepts of the Fundamentals of Jurisprudence such as consensus (*ijmā'*) and analogy (*qiyās*), opinions that would be adopted by Salafis in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Using this ideological foundation, Shawkany and the judges who followed him would re-organize Sunni society in Yemen, marking the transition from a traditional to a modern state before the introduction of British colonialism in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>43</sup>

Although claiming to focus on innovation in the religion and purification of local populations, each of the movements described above had significant political goals as well. As with Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, the environments in which they developed were neither theoretical nor abstract, reflecting a return to textualism or purification of the religion from the influences of philosophers. Rather, they all developed around real-world situations and worked to solve problems that were faced by Muslims at the time. Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb was tied directly to the Bedouin tribal system of Arabia, al Dahlawī used religious power to organize against the advancing British occupation of the Indian subcontinent, and Ibn al Fūdi fought against the influence of corrupt princes of the tribes in northern Nigeria.

There were other reform movements during this time period, however based upon entirely different religious backgrounds. Studying with Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb was Sayed Aḥmad Khan from British India, who would return to his homeland after spending time in the Hijaz and form a religious movement that would eventually lead to major uprisings against the British in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, culminating with the Mutiny of 1857. Contrary to Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, Sayed Aḥmad's movement was strongly connected to mysticism, using its system of allegiance to create a strong following. Bordering at times

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42 Bernard Haykel, *Revival and Reform in Islam: The Legacy of Muḥammad al Shawkānī* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 15 – 18.

43 *Ibid.*, 76 – 108.

on radicalism, at one point during his message he even claimed himself to be the Mahdi, and long after his death the future leaders of his group would claim to be able to interpret his will from the grave.<sup>44</sup>

## **Modernization**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, a modern reform movement would take hold in the Arab world. Born in Iran and raised as a Shi'ite, Jamāl al Dīn al Afghānī would eventually grow to become one of the modern Muslim world's most prominent figures, driving a reform movement based on a response to the Western occupation of Muslim lands as well as corrupt local rulers. A strong advocate of Islamic revolution, Afghānī believed that the solution to Muslim problems was unification, and that only a strong Muslim world would be able to counter the advances of occupation.

Following in Afghānī's footsteps would be his Egyptian student, Muḥammad 'Abdu. After the failure of the Urābi Revolution and the full British occupation of the country he was forced to leave the country, seeking refuge with a teaching position in the Maqāsid Institute of Beirut. It was during this time that he changed his message from the overtly political rhetoric of Afghānī towards the internal re-organization of society from its roots, including reforms to education and the establishment of modern Arab liberalism. After returning to Egypt, he began the work of instituting these societal changes through his writings and religious rulings. A number of his students would become critical to the reform movement in Egypt and across the Muslim world, each taking on a specific subject: Sa'd Zaghloul in his revolution, Qāsim Amīn for women's liberation, Ali 'Abd al-Rāziq for liberalism and politics, literature and criticism with Ṭaha Ḥussayn, and Mustafā 'Abd al-Rāziq in philosophy.

The dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, would see the ideas of pan-Islamism replaced with a strong wave of nationalism beginning with the success of the Kamalist

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44 Charles Allen, *God's Terrorists: The Wahhabi Cult and the Hidden Roots of Modern Jihad* (London: Little Brown, 2006).

Revolution in Turkey, which destroyed the Caliphate and placed the Muslim world in disarray. The response to this change would be conservative, led by figures such as Rashid Reda who defended the place of Islamic tradition and its institutions.<sup>45</sup>

Afghānī, ‘Abdu, and Reda would all refer to the ideas of the Salaf, however arguably simply meaning the principles of the first three generations of Muslims. They felt that Islam was at one point in its earliest history pure, and that a number of thoughts and ideas such as mysticism, Shi'ism, and philosophy had come to destroy this perfect state, trapping the Muslim world in a system of mere imitation and causing their political, economic, and cultural state to decline. This society of imitation was the very definition of *bid'a*, and that Muslims must return to what they had done for centuries: re-interpret their religion to accommodate for modern changes in society.<sup>46</sup>

At the core of this movement was a call to a new understanding of the Qur’ān and Sunna, leading a number of writers to identify this movement as a form of modern Salafism.<sup>47</sup> However, there is no clear indication that any member of this movement ever referred to themselves in this way. Similar to the movements of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, these figures were reacting and adapting to the circumstances of their time, namely Western occupation.

However, by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term Salafism would transform in its usage and association from reform and modernization to what is more popular today. Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia began using the term when they needed to detach themselves from the writings of Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb as his writings came under increased scrutiny.<sup>48</sup> This appropriation of the term Salafī was not an incredibly massive

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45 Hassan Hanafi, *Jamāl al Dīn al Afghānī: Al Mi'awiyya al 'Ūla* (Cairo: Maktabat al 'Usra, 1999) 11-15.

46 Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967) 149-152.

47 Assaf Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011) 94-99.

48 According to the writings of Khaled Abou el Fadl, a number of works such as the Ṣawā’iq al Ilāhiyya by Sulaiman ibn ‘Abdel Wahhāb, the brother of Muḥammad, were written attacking the Salafī methodology as an innovation. Therefore, they adopted the name Salafī to avoid this attachment. See

feat for the Wahhabis, as both they and thinkers such as Muḥammad 'Abdu placed the removal of *bid'a* as a primary goal, albeit with each group approaching the subject differently.

## Summary

From this very brief historical overview, it appears that there are multiple opinions as to the roots of Salafism, the most dominant as an opposition to approaches to theology known as the science of *kalām*, such as the Ash'ari school started by Abu Ḥasan al Ash'arī (260 – 324 Hijra / 874 – 936 CE) and the Mu'atazalī school founded by Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā' (131 Hijra / 700 – 748 CE). Salafis claimed that these schools were infiltrations of Greek philosophy, ideas foreign to what they saw as an originally “pure” Islam. Modern Muslim scholars such as Muḥammad 'Imāra as well as Western studies such as those cited at the beginning of this chapter would attach this drive for purification to a general trend in Islam towards an attachment to the original texts of the Qur'ān and Sunna.

As for the term *Salaf* itself, a wide range of Sunni Muslim thinkers throughout history have at one point or another made a connection to the concept. This was then further elaborated as a preference for the earlier generations of Islam. This term, therefore, does not refer to a particular movement or form of thought, but rather was used as a method of legitimization of ideas and methodology and to increase its popularity, such as in theological debates between adherents of the Ash'arī and Mu'atazalī schools.

But why was such legitimacy necessary? There are two general reasons: a general attachment to the past and the avoidance of *bid'a*. As has been mentioned by classical scholars such as the instructor of al Bukhari, 'Abd Allah ibn Mubārak (118 – 181 Hijra / 736 – 797 CE), one of the strongest advantages to the Islamic system of knowledge and learning is the presence of *Isnād* or the chains of knowledge and traditions which can be traced accurately back to their source, proving their legitimacy.<sup>49</sup>

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Khaled Abou el Fadl, *The Great Theft* (San Francisco: Harper, 2005) 83-86.

49 *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. “Isnād,” accessed 06 April 2012,



As history progressed and new ideas began to enter into the Muslim community, there was a continuing struggle to maintain this connection to the earlier generations and legitimacy in the face of collapsing institutions and colonialism. In the modern world, this struggle is often described by modern writers as a conflict between heritage (*Turāth* or *Aṣāla*) and modernization (*Ḥadātha*). A number of different works have been written on this topic, analyzing the philosophical, legal, and theological balance that each author believes should be made in order to create an interpretation of Islam that is compatible with modern life.<sup>50</sup>

The second reason for this need of legitimacy, and considerably more specific than the first, is the avoidance of accusations of engaging in a practice of innovation in the religion or *bid'a*. Linguistically, the word itself means to establish or begin something. Religiously, however, this refers to the concept of innovation or the establishment of something new in the religion after its completion.<sup>51</sup> This innovation, according to traditional scholars, is divided into two distinct groups. The first includes those innovations that are allowed in the religion and are beneficial to Muslims and their faith. Often-cited is the action of the Caliph 'Umar, who ordered that the night prayers in the month of Ramadan, which were performed in the time of the Prophet Muḥammad at home, to be done in public. Upon seeing the result, he proclaimed: "What a blessing this innovation is!"<sup>52</sup> The second form of *bid'a* is that which is negative or has a detrimental effect on Muslims and society which is recognized as forbidden.

Reform movements typically classified as "Salafī" such as those described earlier in this chapter considered all innovations as negative and made their removal the cornerstone of their message. This drive tends to be the only shared concept between

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[http://www.brillonline.nl.library.aucegypt.edu:2048/subscriber/entry?entry=islam\\_SIM-3665](http://www.brillonline.nl.library.aucegypt.edu:2048/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_SIM-3665).

50 Ḥassan Ḥanafī, *Al Turāth wa al Tajdīd: Mawqifuna min al Turāth al Qadīm* (Cairo: al Markaz al 'Arabī lil Baḥth wa al Nashr, 1980).

51 Ibn Mandhūr 8, 6.

52 Bukhārī, Vol 3, P, 45, Book al Tarāwīḥ, Chapter Faḍl man Qāma Ramḍān.

historical groups and the modern manifestation of Salafism in the Islamic world today.

Therefore, the approach taken by scholars of describing Salafi ideas as a reaction to innovation and an attempt to legitimize Islamic thought in light of the original texts is legitimate, however very abstract. If one were to look at each of the movements and figures claimed by modern authors to be Salafi, one finds that each of these movements appeared and developed in light of particular historical and societal circumstances that pushed them into existence. Salafism therefore is less connected to general religious trends, and has much more to do with what is going on in the societies where these movements thrive.

### **A Group or Not?**

After this summary, an important question remains: is the Salafi movement an independent group of Muslims, representing a separate theological approach? According to most Salafi works themselves, this particular issue is one of considerable debate and confusion. The *fatwá* from Saudi Arabia cited at the beginning of this chapter states that Salafis are all Muslims who follow the Qur'ān, the Sunna of the Prophet Muḥammad, and the first three generations of Islam. However, in the following ruling of the same collection, when asked which groups are closest to the truth of Islam, the ordered response is the *Ahl Al Sunna* who are *the Ahl Al Ḥadith*, then *the Anṣār al Sunna*, and then the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>53</sup> The Saudi Fatwa Committee does also maintain a bit of confusion that all of these groups are partially right and wrong, and that they should be dealt with as long as they advocate what is correct according to the Qur'ān and Sunna in the issues of theology, and rejected for all things that contradict the true beliefs.<sup>54</sup>

Ibn 'Uthaymīn, a prominent Saudi scholar and mentor of a number of members of the movement in Egypt, provides a slightly different approach to Salafism, describing

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<sup>53</sup> *Fātwa al Lajna al Dā'ima* vol 2, p 238, no 6250, accessed 23 Feb 2012,

<http://www.alifta.net/Fatawa/FatawaChapters.aspx?View=Page&PageID=607&PageNo=1&BookID=3>.

<sup>54</sup> *Fātwa al Lajna al Dā'ima* vol 2, p 239, no. 6280, accessed 23 Feb 2012,

<http://www.alifta.net/Fatawa/FatawaChapters.aspx?View=Page&PageID=608&PageNo=1&BookID=3>.

that there are two different concepts of Salafism. The first is a political movement which seeks to divide Muslims and is therefore entirely forbidden. The second, however, is the true path of Islam, which follows the Qur'ān and Sunna.<sup>55</sup> However, in his other discussions, he states that Muslims are not simply Salafi by virtue of them being Muslim, but rather they must actively work to adopt certain principles that remove the *bid'a* from their belief and practice which causes them to separate from the rest of the Muslim population and become Salafi<sup>56</sup>, a clear indication that this is a separate group of Muslims.

Nāṣir al Dīn al-Albānī, in his fatwa collections, makes similar statements. Any attachment to a group in Islam, whether this might be in the form of a school of jurisprudence or theology, is entirely forbidden in the religion.<sup>57</sup> He even extends his opinion to state that such strong attachment to these groups has led to significant rifts in the Muslim community, to the point where even the mosques are designed to accommodate the different schools of law, and that separate prayers take place where students of each respective school pray in the way of their school founders. However, according to him there is such a thing as the Salaf, which is the only group of Muslims that should be followed.

Critics of the Salafi movement such as Sa'īd Ramaḍān al Būṭī would draw attention to this contradiction, stating that Salafis are attempting to create a form of *No Madhhab*, marking one of the most dangerous moves in Islamic history.<sup>58</sup> Ultimately, it appears that much of the discussion of a historical Salafism is an anachronism, based largely on the modern views and needs of those who currently self-identify as Salafis.

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55 "Ibn al-'Uthaymīn – 'The Salafi Sect' vs. The Way of the Salaf," YouTube video, 2:58, from a private lecture, posted by "SFAvfx." 10 Dec 2009, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2v\\_qeMxc\\_vY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2v_qeMxc_vY).

56 Ḥamdi ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Umar, ed. *Al Fawā'id al Majmū'a min al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥa wa al-Da'īfa wa al-Mawḍū'a* (Cairo: Dār al Rawḍa, 2008,) 3, 26-29.

57 Selim, ed. *Al-Masā'il al-'Ilmiyya*, 30.

58 Sa'īd Ramaḍān al Būṭī, *Al Lā Madhhabiyya* (Damascus, Syria: Dār al Farābī, 2005).

## **CHAPTER 2:**

### **History of the Movement in Egypt**

Creating a historical image of the Salafi movement in Egypt is a difficult process. This is not an organized and defined group such as the Muslim Brotherhood, as described in the first chapter of this study, and is rather a collection of individuals. Additionally, as was discussed in the first chapter of this study, the ambiguity of the term *Salafi* and its use by such a wide spectrum of Islamic groups also makes even the association of a movement much harder to discover. The main figures observed for this study can be broken into two main groups: those who joined the movement earlier in their lives and those who joined later.

#### **Group 1: Foreign Education**

Most individuals in both groups were all born between the years 1947-1962 and those from the first group primarily began preaching in the mid to late 1970s and early 1980s. They come mainly from primarily rural and lower-class backgrounds, and showed no major interest in the religious sciences in their early life. Like most Egyptians in this period and social class, in their childhoods they attended government schools through to the high school level and in the afternoons were given a general introduction to the basics of their faith from those in their community. Many of them had also completed the memorization of the Qur'ān by the time they were fifteen, usually at the hands of a family member.

After finishing high school, these young Egyptian men then left their villages and moved to larger cities for higher education, usually attending one of the country's two largest universities based in the capital, Cairo and Ain Shams. They achieved degrees in a range of subjects, which usually had little to do with religion. It was during this time as college students that what would become the main figures of the Salafi movement would be fully exposed to the problems of Egyptian society.

At this point, it is necessary to depart slightly from the stories of the Salafi

movement and discuss briefly the changes that had occurred in modern Egypt. The military coup in 1952, which had overthrown the ruling monarchy, brought with it the goal of freeing Egyptians from the grasps of foreign occupation and control. The policies enacted by the new President Jamāl 'Abd al-Nasser, who came into power in 1954, further solidified a form of new socialism backed by the power and central organization and planning of the armed forces.

On the economic front, the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s led to a large expansion of the Egyptian economy. The agricultural plantations which had for years been the backbone of the upper-classes was broken up and given to the lower classes of the society, re-distributing wealth. Industrialization, combined with heavy restrictions on imports, caused increased economic growth levels and made Egypt wealthier than it had been in a century.<sup>59</sup> The new government also began to nationalize a number of foreign-owned institutions and used the funds acquired to offer Egyptians, particularly those in the countryside, a larger package of social services including free healthcare, guaranteed employment, and heavily-subsidized basic services such as electricity water, and bread.<sup>60</sup>

Before the Revolution, the urban middle and upper classes had used their access to education as a barrier between them and the poorer rural classes. Under the Nasser regime, however, public education was now made available to a much wider spectrum of society. The number of students in Egyptian universities skyrocketed, which subsequently led to the intense overcrowding of the existing facilities and a decrease in the overall quality of education.<sup>61</sup>

These factors combined to cause major shifts in the overall Egyptian society. Poor Egyptians who were previously restricted to rural areas were now moving in large

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59 Galal Amin, *Miṣr wa al-Miṣriyyūn fī 'Ahd Mubārak* (Cairo: Dār Mīrit, 2009), 73-77.

60 Barbara Freyer, *The Islamic Impulse* (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1987), 121-125.

61 Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 135-136.

numbers into the cities, using the opened education system, increased public sector jobs, as well as social services to achieve a higher social status. These shifts and shocks for many arriving in the cities have been discussed by economists such as Galal Amin<sup>62</sup> and appeared in literature of the time in the works of authors such as Aḥmad 'Abd al- Mu'aṭi Ḥejāzī.<sup>63</sup>

By the end of the 1960s, however, many of these ideals and promises made by Abd al-Nasser for a successful, developing society free of foreign control had come into serious question. The first major blow came in 1967 when Egypt witnessed a crushing defeat by the Israeli army, leaving almost all of the country's defenses in disarray and the Sinai Peninsula in the hands of the Israelis.<sup>64</sup> This defeat would lead to a costly rebuilding of the Egyptian army, which would bring the country into large amounts of public debt that would further cripple the Egyptian economy as a whole and place it at the hands of its creditors.<sup>65</sup> But the defeat of 1967 was not solely an issue of the military, but rather it placed the fundamental ideas of the 1952 Revolution and Nasser's policies into question.<sup>66</sup> How could Egypt, a country that had freed itself from colonial rule and witnessed such a successful period of economic expansion and cultural growth, be so easily crippled by what was a much smaller, much younger, Jewish nation?

This issue represented the focal point of public discourse in Egyptian society after 1967, and the discussion continued to grow well into the 1970s. The solution quickly became calls for a return to Islam. A strong connection to religious foundations, given its historical successes, was the only way that Egyptian society would be able to return to its previous strength.

Writer Muḥammad Jalāl Kishk, who had previously been a strong advocate of

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62 Amin, 121-141.

63 Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mu'aṭi Ḥejāzī, *Diwān* (Beirut: Dār al 'Awda, 1982).

64 Jeremy Bowen, *Six Days: How the 1967 war shaped the Middle East* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2005).

65 Amin, 77-78.

66 Yusuf al Qaradawi, *Dars al-Nakba Al Thāniya* (Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 1987).

socialism but had since turned to Islamism, wrote that it was Israel's strong connection to its religion and dedication to its cause that had caused it to succeed, and that Arab nationalism had failed because it had relied on a secular instead of religious backing. In his description of Al Azhar, he presents his veiled criticism of the Nasser regime:

“When Al Azhar was built Arab civilization possessed all the knowledge foundations to set-off an industrial revolution, if two storms had not struck the Islamic world: the Crusades and the Mongol destruction...Modern civil society then transformed into a rough military society, and the scholars pulled back for the armed forces to rule...and the nation's resources were pushed and bled out in war...cities and farms were burned and all the remnants of civilization were left at the hands of the coming invaders, or the retreating defeated armies.”<sup>67</sup>

In another article in the same collection, he then states his message more clearly:

“...Why didn't the Renaissance and civilization movements succeed in the building of a modern Arab state until today? The answer to the second question is, simply, that Al Azhar didn't lead this movement, and therefore it didn't succeed nor become central, nor was it able to move the depths of the public for the sake of an uprising of modernization...rather it remained simply a flake on the surface.”<sup>68</sup>

At the academic level the International Institute of Islamic Thought and its founder, 'Abd al-Hamīd Abū Sulaymān, dedicated itself to creating what he referred to as re-building Islamic knowledge and heritage through a new understanding of Western sciences. He felt that this Islam-West knowledge cooperation would allow for an Islamic renaissance to take place.<sup>69</sup>

The desire of the youth in Egypt and the Muslim world as a whole to return to

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67 Muḥammad Jalāl Kishk, “Al Azhar: Thawra Ujhiḍat” in *Kalām li Misr* (Beirut: Dār Al Waṭan Al 'Arabī, 1974), 325.

68 Kishk, 331.

69 The International Institute of Islamic Thought is a private non-profit institute founded in 1981 and currently has its headquarters outside of Washington, D.C. Focused on academic lectures, publications, and conferences; the institute has branch centers in other countries such as Egypt and the United Kingdom. See Various Authors, *Islāmiyyat al Ma'rifa: Al Mabādi' al 'Amma, Khuṭat al 'Amal, al Injāzāt* (Washington, D.C.: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1986).

religious principles would be described in detail by Muslim Brotherhood preacher Yusuf al Qaradawi. In a number of works, he described what he was witnessing as an “Awakening,” where the Muslim youth were beginning to regain the awareness of their own heritage and chart their own path. This awakening would lead, in his own view, to a complete re-organization of society at all levels based upon the over-arching principles of Islam.<sup>70</sup>

Unfortunately, however, it was clear that at this time the traditional centers of Islamic leadership in Egypt were not sufficient to guide this religious resurgence. The role of Al Azhar, for example, had been placed on the sidelines through deep connections to the state. The *waqf* system, the primary method through which its and many other religious activities in the country were funded, had been subject to a number reforms in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was brought under the full control of the Nasser regime beginning with the passing of Law 247 of 1953 regarding family charities, with a number of other legal reforms aimed at the country’s religious endowments passed within the following decade.<sup>71</sup> In 1963, Law 103 was passed that added a number of new secular faculties to Al Azhar, placing enormous pressures for change upon its leadership and heavily decreasing their influence on society.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, it was necessary for the would-be Salafis to search-out an alternative outlet for their religious needs.

The existing Islamic alternative in Egypt to Al Azhar at the time was that of the Muslim Brotherhood. However, throughout the 1950s and 60s, the movement was the subject of relentless state-sponsored repression, leaving most of the higher-ranking members of the movement either in prison or executed.<sup>73</sup>

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70 Yusuf al Qaradawi, *The Islamic Awakening Between Rejection and Extremism* (Herndon, Va: American Trust Publication and the International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1991).

71 Barbara Ibrahim, *From Charity to Social Change: Trends in Arab Philanthropy* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2008), 29.

72 Malika Zeghal, “Religion and Politics in Egypt” in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Vol 1, No 3 (August 1999) p. 371-399.

73 Yusuf al Qaradawi, *Al Ikhwān al Muslimūn: 70 'Āman fī al Da'wah wa al Tarbiyah wa al Jihād* (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 1999).



In 1973, the oil embargo placed by the Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, resulted in the spiking of the price of oil and the influx of money into these economies, which the Saudi government then used to spread their interpretation of Islam: Wahhabism. This was carried out not only through a policy of using large amounts of money to create dominant Islamic institutions such as the Organization for Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Muslim World League as well as publish works and support authors who promote Wahhabi ideas. This allowed them to take over the discourse of other traditional Muslim societies, sidelining those in the mainstream.<sup>74</sup>

As a result of this increased Saudi wealth and influence, starting from the late 1970s, almost all of the members of the Salafi movement in Egypt spent some time in Saudi Arabia. It is also mentioned prominently in many of the biographies of Salafi leaders that their travel to Saudi Arabia was the first occasion when they began their “true” religious studies at the hands of their scholars, and that they had only been partially interested in Islamic sciences before their visit. Some members of the movement mentioned that they openly continue their connection to Saudi Arabia, visiting the country for the purposes of continuing their education as well as religious pilgrimage.

Almost none of this study, however, was carried out at Saudi Arabia's official religious universities such as Umm al Qura in Mecca or the Islamic University in Medina. Rather, these studies usually consisted of attending private lectures and readings of Islamic texts in either the homes of their teacher or in a local mosque. It is also important to note that many biographies of the Salafi leaders in Egypt state that they spent very little actual time in lessons, and that on some occasions simply greeting a major Saudi sheikh during the pilgrimage in Mecca or making a special journey to visit them in a mosque was sufficient to place him on their list of teachers and influences.

Additionally, during the mid- to late-1970s a number of Azhar-educated scholars also became attracted by Saudi influence, and perhaps the most well-known of these

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74 Abou el Fadl, 60

individuals is 'Abd al-Laṭīf Al Mushtuharī. Al Mushtuharī was born in 1915, graduated with a degree in Religious Sciences in 1944 and was appointed as a state-recognized preacher in 1947, by the 1970s had become highly involved in the Salafi movement and became the head of the Shari'a Society or the *Jam'iyya Shar'iyya*<sup>75</sup> in 1976, what had come to be one of the largest non-state Islamic institutions in the country.<sup>76</sup>

The influence of Saudi Arabia is critical to understanding the spread of the Salafi movement in Egypt. Before the middle of the 1970s, there is no discernible presence to this movement. None of the current members of the Salafi movement mention any major Egyptian figures who classified themselves as Salafis or claimed to be part of the movement. In most of their biographies, the Salafis list almost exclusively Saudi influences, and the only Egyptians who are mentioned are figures known for their anti-regime stances, such as 'Abd al-Hamīd Kishk. The knowledge that they obtained from these figures is never discussed and mentioned only generally, indicating that they were not considered a major influence, but rather are used as a way to disconnect themselves from the religious stances of the regime.

It should also be noted that travel of Egyptians to Saudi Arabia after the embargo of 1973 and the expansion of the Saudi economy was not limited to those who traveled for religious or academic purposes. Hundreds of thousands of Egyptians immigrated to Saudi Arabia as well as other Gulf nations during this period for work in the expanding oil sector. Their impact on the economy and culture of Egypt upon their return in the 1980s and 1990s has been the subject of extensive discussion amongst sociologists.<sup>77</sup>

Upon returning to Egypt after their time in Saudi Arabia, these future Salafi

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75 The *Jam'iyya Shar'iyya* is a private Muslim charity organization founded in 1912 by Maḥmūd Muḥammad Khaṭāb al-Subkī. Focusing on areas such as raising societal awareness, providing religious education, and offering social services such as medical care and disaster relief, it has grown to become the single largest religious charitable organization currently in operation in Egypt.

76 'Abd al-Laṭīf al Mushtuharī, *Hādhihi Da'watuna* (Cairo: Maktabat al I'tiṣām, 1979).

77 Galal Amin and Elizabeth Awany, *International Migration of Egyptian Labour* (Washington, D.C.: International Development Research Centre, 1985).

preachers then began to speak to the public. Due to limitations in media access and heavy state control, their influence remained severely limited to regional mosques and the surrounding villages. They also began to publish and present their opinions against that of the prominent religious leaders of the time, usually through smaller pamphlets that were widely available. They also sought to spread their message beyond their traditional rural platforms by recording their lectures and sermons on cassette tapes, bypassing the state-controlled radio stations.

In Alexandria, a group of these college students including Muḥammad Ismaʿīl al Muqaddam, Aḥmad Farīd, Saʿīd 'Abd al-'Adhīm, and Muḥammad 'Abd al-Fattāh, fresh from their influences in Saudi Arabia founded in 1977 a program that they called the Salafi School, acting as a break-off movement from the *Jamā'a Islāmiyya*, a more politically violent group at the time that had connections to the Muslim Brotherhood. Over time, this group would eventually grow to become the *Da'wa Salafiyya* of Alexandria, one of the largest and most highly-organized groups of Salafis in the country.<sup>78</sup>

As time passed, the influence of these preachers began to grow, and they were now being welcomed to considerably larger speaking venues, again usually in mosques, in the larger regional capitals. Their numbers of followers had continued to increase, largely due to an increasing library of printed pamphlets and cassette tapes. They also started to hold regular lessons in major regional cities, bringing in students from the surrounding areas. Some of these students would eventually enhance their standing to constitute the second group of Salafi preachers.

## **Group Two: Local Dependence**

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<sup>78</sup> Little work has been presented on the details of this movement's background, and it is the intention of the researcher to develop a more detailed study in the future. See Ali 'Abd al-'Aāl, "The Da'wa Salafiyya in Alexandria...Historical Establishment and Important Characteristics." The Arab Website for Mental and Social Health, Maganin, last modified 9 May 2011, accessed 8 March 2012, <http://www.maganin.com/content.asp?contentid=18566>.

This new group of Salafi speakers, although from roughly the same generation as Group 1, began preaching at a much later period in their lives at around the latter half of the 1980s and through to the 2000s. They also came from backgrounds that were much more diverse, and even though many continued to follow the traditional pattern of a lower-class, rural background with little religious education some, including ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Māzin Al Sirsāwī, and Muḥammad al Saghīr for example, completed their religious training from Al Azhar in the fields of Comparative Religion, Hadith, and Da'wa respectively. The former two are now professors in their respective departments.

With the availability of the teachers from the first group of Salafis and a growing list of publications and lectures from both Saudi Arabia and Egypt, there was no longer the need to travel outside of the country to obtain their education, as they had all that they required in Egypt to support the movement. However, many in this second group still travel to Saudi Arabia regularly.

Socially, many of the factors that had promoted the growth of the first group of Salafi leaders continued to remain the same, or had become further accentuated. Gaps between the rich and poor had continued to grow, economic progress had become stagnant and the country had been pulled into a significant amount of foreign debt that it was unable to repay. Academically, the public education system had dragged behind under increasingly larger numbers of students, limited facilities, and budgets.

The Muslim Brotherhood, crippled by decades of violent repression from the regime, remained under extreme pressure from the government. However, during this time it had built-up an extensive social network that gave it the political support of the lower and middle-classes, ensuring them the position as the only formidable political alternative to the regime.

By this time Al Azhar, which was still under the complete control of the state, had started to become more aware of the Salafi movement and begun to respond. The most

vocal of these individuals was Muḥammad Al Ghazālī, whose works directly attacked the opinions of Salafis. However, despite this increased awareness, Al Azhar remained incapable of impacting the growth of the Salafi movement because of its clear connections to the state. Preachers who had graduated from Al Azhar were seen as simply the religious arm of the state, and therefore held no public legitimacy. In one of his most important works attacking Salafism, *Al Sunna Al Nabawiyya Bayn Ahl al Ḥadith wa Ahl al Fiqh*, Al Ghazālī laments the position of Al Azhar and the rise of Salafism:

“But Al Azhar for thirty years or more has collapsed in the leadership and scientific aspects. This has left the way empty for every croaker<sup>79</sup> and proceeded to place the half or tenth educated at the front of the caravan, causing tribulation rather than putting it out. And so spreads the Bedouin jurisprudence, and the childish depictions of belief and law.”<sup>80</sup>

In the 1980s, the Egyptian government led by President Hosni Mubarak, in response to the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981, began a severe crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups that promoted either participation in the political process or, in more violent instances, advocated for the use of violence against the regime and its agents. The Salafis, during their education in Saudi Arabia, had been taught that participation in the political process was not allowed, and many members of the Salafi movement had repeatedly condemned all forms of public protest and discouraged any form of participation in the political sphere. This was extremely attractive to the regime and presented an alternative to the Muslim Brotherhood. Therefore, it instituted a policy among its security services of leaving the members of the Salafi movement to preach as they wished.

This proved to be an advantage for the Salafis, allowing their movement to continue its growth unabated. It was also during this time that the movement began to gain significant numbers of followers in urban areas. This remained the state of the Salafi movement in Egypt until the introduction of satellite television and the Internet in the late

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79 The term used in Arabic (نَاعِق) literally means someone who makes a croak of a frog

80 Muḥammad al Ghazālī, *Al Sunnah al Nabawiyyah*, 15.

1990s and into the 2000s.

In the new century, a major shift occurred in the Salafi movement that allowed it to further expand: an introduction to politics following the overthrow of the Mubarak government in public protests that began on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Although their participation during the protest movement was not highlighted, a number of Salafi speakers such as Muḥammad Ḥassān did speak to the media regarding the issue, asking the youth protestors to remain calm and voice their opinions peacefully.<sup>81</sup>

In the following months, the first true political participation of the Salafi movement was that during the referendum of the constitutional amendments. According to the Salafis, if the amendments were not passed, this would allow liberal forces in the country to write a new constitution, removing Article Two.<sup>82</sup> In response, they launched a comprehensive campaign in support of the amendments, helping to secure their passing. In celebration of the victory and what would become a famous media gaff, Muḥammad Ḥussein Ya'qūb was recorded at a mosque in the Imbaba neighborhood of Cairo stating the chant of the conquering of Mecca by the Prophet Muḥammad and that the passing of these amendments marked the coming of Islam in Egypt. If any person was not in agreement with the Islamic nature of the Egyptian state, then they should leave.<sup>83</sup> This speech quickly became known in Egyptian media as the “Battle of the Ballot Boxes.”<sup>84</sup>

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of June, 2011, the founding of the first official Salafi political party

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81 “Kalimat al Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān Ḥawl Aḥdāth al Thawra bi Misr Kāmilatan,” YouTube video, 9:09, from an interview on Al-Arabiya, posted by “sms4all.” 1 Feb 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKa76i3EKKQ>.

82 Article 2 reads “Islam is the religion of the state, Arabic is the official language, and the principles of Islamic Shari'a are the primary source for legislation.”

”الاسلام دين الدولة، و اللغة العربية لغتها الرسمية، و مبادئ الشريعة الاسلامية المصدر الرئيسي للتشريع.”

“Al I'lān al Dustūri,” Bawābat al Ḥukūma al Misriyya, accessed 5 Apr 2012, <http://www.masr.gov.eg/arabic/laws/constitution/default.aspx>.

83 “Ghazwat al Ṣanādīq,” YouTube video, 8:37, from a live broadcast of a mosque speech, posted by “mansoura2010.” 22 Mar 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnOxAQGFSHU>.

84 ‘Umar al Hādī, “Muḥammad Ḥussein Ya'qūb: Intaṣarna fi Ghazwat al Ṣanādīq wa al Balad Baladna...wa al Sha'b Qāla Na'm li al Dīn,” Al Masry al Yawm, 21 Mar 2011.

was approved by the government authorities, marking their official entry into the political system<sup>85</sup> and the third political party established after the Revolution, following Hizb al Wasat and Hizb al Huriyya wa al 'Adāla. Liberal observers such as Ibrahīm 'Issá found this quick registration shocking, quoting that the large financial sums of money required to establish such a party hinted that there was foreign funding involved,<sup>86</sup> however no evidence was ever produced to these claims.

The Nour Party was then quickly joined by two other Salafi political parties, Al Asāla established on August 28th<sup>87</sup> and *Al Binā' wa Al Tanmiya* on October 9th.<sup>88</sup> They came together to form a single block in the 2011-2012 parliamentary elections, and eventually won a total of 24% for the lower house<sup>89</sup> and 25% for the upper house.<sup>90</sup>

The result of this public development for the Salafis following the removal of the Mubarak regime has served to significantly formalize the movement and increase the public profile of its members. Speakers tied with the Salafi movement are no longer restricted to mosques and their religious channels, but have become popular leaders in their own right, pressing their issues upon even the country's largest religious figures.<sup>91</sup>

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85 "Our Activities," Hizb al Nour, accessed 8 March 2012, <http://alnourparty.org/page/ouractivities>.

86 "Ibrahīm 'Issá Yakshif Haqīqat Hizb al Nūr al Salafī," YouTube video, 3:41, from a broadcast on Al Tahrir satellite station, posted by "alwastea." 9 Aug 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NtqOL\\_MKWIo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NtqOL_MKWIo).

NOTE: He incorrectly presents the Nour Party as the second party to be established after the 25<sup>th</sup> of January Revolution. The first party to be established was actually Hizb al Wasat, however their application had been presented to the government before the Revolution but were not given official approval until the 19<sup>th</sup> of February, 2011.

87 "Hizb al Asāla al Salafī," Al Hay'a al 'Ammā lil Isti'lāmāt, accessed 8 Mar 2012, <http://www.sis.gov.eg/ar/Story.aspx?sid=51587>.

88 "Hizb al Binā' wa al Tanmiya," Al Hay'a al 'Ammā lil Isti'lāmāt, accessed 8 Mar 2012, <http://www.sis.gov.eg/ar/Story.aspx?sid=52513>.

89 Jamal'Essam al-Din, "Egypt's post-Mubarak Legislative Life Begins Amid Tension and Divisions," Al Ahram Weekly, 23 Jan 2012

90 "Results of Shura Council elections," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, accessed 12 Mar 2012, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/29/results-of-shura-council-elections>.

91 For an example of this, see Muḥammad Ḥassān's impact on the Sheikh of Al Azhar Aḥmad El Tayyib in the former's campaign to remove US foreign aid: "Al Azhar Supports the 'No to American Aid' Initiative...Establishment of the 'Pride and Dignity Fund'...and Calls for Citizens to Gather 500 Billion Pounds." Published in Al Ahram, 17 February 2012. Available at <http://www.ahram.org/The-First/News/131780.aspx>. Last accessed 4 March 2012.

Another development has also occurred, although still in its foundational stages. Nine of the country's most prominent Salafi preachers<sup>92</sup> have formed what they are calling the *Majlis Shūrā al 'Ulamā'*, or the Council of Scholarly Recommendation, designed to offer a unified Salafi voice in both religious and political issues. This is clearly an attempt to counter the influence of Al Azhar and the Dar al Iftā', the country's two official religious institutions that have traditionally been the primary sources for religious debate. Among their four meetings and 19 official statements as of April 2012, the Council has commented on politics, defended members of the council against accusations from other Salafi figures, and voiced their opinions on major events.<sup>93</sup>

### Methods of Communication

There are two shared characteristics between all of the forms of communication used by Salafis: their unofficial nature and their ease of access to the general Egyptian public. It is through ensuring through any means necessary that their message is heard by the largest audience possible, avoiding traditional government controls that they have been able to so strongly increase their influence.

What seems to further the ease of access to Salafi material is price. For example, for the initial work of this study, a number of Salafi works were purchased in the Al Azhar neighborhood of Cairo, in an alleyway lined with bookstores catering to students of the religious university.<sup>94</sup> On one occasion in February of 2012 the researcher purchased 25 Salafi works, the majority of which were hardbound and one consisted of four volumes, for a total 450 LE (approximately \$75). Opposed to this would be the work of *Kanz al Rāghibīn*, a single two-volume classical text of Shafi'i jurisprudence, which was purchased on the same day in the same location for 200 LE (approximately \$33).

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92 These figures are in order as presented on their official website: 'Abd Allah Shākir, Abu Ishāq al Huwainī, Muḥammad Ḥassān, Muḥammad Ḥussein Ya'qūb, Mustafā al 'Adawī, Sa'īd 'Abd al-'Adhīm, Jamāl al Murākibī, Wahīd 'Abd al-Salām Bālī, Abu Bakr al Ḥanbalī, Jamāl 'Abd al-Raḥmān

93 "Bayānāt wa Tawṣiyyāt," Majlis Shūrā al 'Ulamā' bi Misr, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://www.shora-alolamaa.com/eg/catplay.php?catsmktba=34>.

94 A full list of these works can be found at the end of this study



In the 1990s and early 2000s, two new mediums appeared on the public sphere that were not subject to the traditional state controls, which allowed the movement to bring their message to the widest audience possible: the internet and satellite television.

According to a report published at the end of 2010, the government estimated that approximately 23 million Egyptians, or approximately a third of the country has regular access to the Internet,<sup>95</sup> with millions more having sporadic access. Websites that promote the Salafi movement based from Egypt such as Anasalafy.com have thousands of users, and have even begun to organize public lectures attracting major speakers from the Salafi movement.<sup>96</sup> Additionally, one of the most highly organized groups in the country, the *Da'wa Salafiyya* in Alexandria, runs a website called SalafVoice, with an equally large following.<sup>97</sup>

More recently, the spread of social networking and its use by Egyptians to organize politically has also been utilized by Salafis, with a number of groups promoting Salafi presidential candidates,<sup>98</sup> defending the reputations of prominent Salafi speakers,<sup>99</sup> or even to invite non-Salafis to interact with members of the movement at a local coffee chain to reduce public fear of the more extreme preachers.<sup>100</sup>

The first Islamic satellite channel in the Arab world to broadcast the Salafi message from Egypt was Al Nās. With its initial programming in 2006 it played music, dance, and weddings, but within six months had changed to broadcast a strict form of Salafism, arguably because it would bring in significantly more profits.<sup>101</sup> The speakers

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95 "Internet Users in Egypt Increased 28 Percent Last Year." Egypt Independent, 30 Mar 2011, accessed 12 Mar 2012, <http://www.egyptindependent.com/node/380145>.

96 Mawq' Ana Salafi, accessed 12 Mar 2012, <http://www.anasalafy.com>.

97 Sawt al Salaf, accessed 9 Apr 2012, <http://www.salafvoice.com/>.

98 "Hāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Ismā'īl," Facebook page, accessed 12 Mar 2012, <http://www.facebook.com/HazemSalahFB>.

99 "Muḥibbī Al 'Allāma Abi Ishāq al Ḥuwainī," Facebook page, accessed 12 Mar 2012, <http://www.facebook.com/alhewenyfans>.

100 "Ṣafḥat Salafīo Costa," Facebook page, accessed 12 Mar 2012, <http://www.facebook.com/salafyocosta>.

101 Aḥmad Abu Habiba, "Islamic Media and the Shaping of an Arab Identity" in *Perspectives*, vol. 3, issue 2, Feb 2011.

on this channel would then slowly split-off, leaving to found their own channels including Al Rahma, Al Hikma, and Hafiz chronologically. Each of these channels is known for its respective sheikhs who act on the administrative boards and as supervisors. Al Rahma for example is supervised by Muḥammad Ḥassān, Al Hikma is supervised by Abu Ishāq Al Huwainī.

The relationship of these channels with the government remained benign, with the Egyptian authorities largely avoiding confrontation with their increasingly violent programming, allowing many of these satellite channels to quickly become some of the most-watched in the country.<sup>102</sup> On October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010 however, in an unexpected move, the state-owned satellite operator NileSat chose to suspend the licenses and stop the broadcast of channels Al Rahma and Al Hikma.<sup>103</sup> The official reason given to the closures was that these channels had not paid the necessary licensing fees, however others associated to the channels believed that this was a move by the government to restrict popular religious speech that was becoming increasingly more politically oriented.<sup>104</sup>

### **Position in the Salafi Movement**

One of the clearest conclusions that can be derived from the discussion above is that the Salafi movement is largely a popular one, and that the hierarchical placement of a preacher of the Salafi movement is based purely upon public popularity based largely on their position in the media. The wider a particular speaker's media presence, the more books they have published, and the more they position themselves as religiously legitimate, the higher position they achieve.

Alternatively, if a member of the Salafi movement makes a remark that is seen as

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102 Nathan Field and Aḥmad Hamam, "Satellite TV in Egypt," in *Arab Media and Society*, Spring 2009.

103 Hāni al Dibānī, "Ighlāq Qanāt al Hikma al Faḍā'iyya wa Iyqāf Bath 'Al Rahma' min Medīnat al Intāj," *Al Yawm al Sabī'a*, 19 October 2010.

104 "Radd al Sheikh Ḥassān 'ala Qafl Qanāt al Raḥma," YouTube video, 50:53, from an episode of Live With on the Al Jazeera satellite channel, posted by "alrahmatvchannel." 19 Oct 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYU7GPYQDe4>.

inappropriate or garners a negative public response, the individual is immediately isolated from public conversation, condemned, and usually makes an apology, then reducing his profile for a short period before returning. An example of this would be the “Battle of the Ballot Boxes” incident as described above. After the statements issued by Muḥammad Ḥussein Ya’qūb Egyptian media outlets, both liberal and Islamist, universally condemned the remarks. He quickly issued an apology and then went for almost four months without any major public appearances.

### **Selected Biographies<sup>105</sup>**

What follows here are a selection of biographies of prominent members of the Salafi movement whose opinions were utilized for the following chapter of this study.

#### **Yāsser Burhāmī<sup>106</sup>**

The current manager of the Salaf Voice website, Yasser Burhami was born in 1958 in the Delta city of Kafr al Dawwār in the Buhaira governate. In 1982 and 1992 he obtained his Bachelor's and Masters in medicine and pediatrics respectively, and in 1999 received a general diploma in Shari'a from Al Azhar University.

He has written a number of works on the Salafi movement, the first an explanation of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's *Kitāb al Tawḥīd* in 1980. He currently lives in Alexandria and teaches at the Furqan Institute for training religious preachers.

#### **Wagdy Ghuneim<sup>107</sup>**

Wagdy Ghuneim was born in Alexandria in 1951, and received his Bachelor's in Business Management from Alexandria University in 1973. Although focusing largely on business practices, he also holds a Masters and Doctorate from the Graduate Theological

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105 All of the dates presented here were written in their Hijri form with no reference to exact months or days, creating a margin of error of approximately one year in either direction.

106 “Tarjamat al Sheikh al Duktūr Yāsser al Burhāmī,” SalafVoice, accessed 7 Apr 2012, [http://www.salafvoice.com/moshref\\_resume.php](http://www.salafvoice.com/moshref_resume.php).

107 “Tarjamat al Sheikh Wajdī Ghoneim,” Muntadayāt Sabīl al Ḥaqq, 23 Jun 2011, accessed 9 Apr 2012, <http://www.islammont.com/showthread.php?p=9682>.

Foundation, an interfaith religious college based in the U.S. state of Indiana. Both of these degrees are reportedly in Jurisprudence, however the college has never offered such a program and only awards a general degree in Islamic Studies that does not include Islamic law.<sup>108</sup>

Due to his past membership in the Muslim Brotherhood and his frequent discussions on politics, Wagdy Ghuneim has been forced to frequently move to different nations of the world, including Bahrain, South Africa, the United States, Britain, and Yemen, each state being forced out and banned from returning. He currently appears regularly on Salafi satellite channels such as Al Nas as well as posts audio and video messages on YouTube expressing his opinions on current Egyptian events.

### **Muḥammad Ḥassān<sup>109</sup>**

Born in the village of Demouh in the Daqahliyya governate in 1962, Muḥammad Ibrahim Ḥassān came from a poor rural family. However, they gave him a slightly stronger background in religious studies at a much earlier age, allowing him to memorize the Qur'ān and give religious speeches to members of his community until his later childhood. He attended government schools, and eventually traveled to Cairo for university, graduating with a degree in Media Studies from Cairo University. During his university studies, colleagues remarked at his already growing attention to religion and ability to communicate and convince his peers,<sup>110</sup> however there is no indication that this came from any type of formal studies. In the summer of his first year of university studies, Muḥammad traveled to Jordan to attend lectures of Al Albānī, however for only a few weeks.

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108 “Masters Programs,” Graduate Theological Foundation, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://www.gtfeducation.org/academics/masters-programs.cfm>.

109 “Ta’rīf bi Faḍīlat al Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān,” Mawqī’ Faḍīlat al Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān, accessed 3 Mar 2012, <http://www.mohamedhassan.org/ta3reef%20belshiekh.htm>, and “Tarjamat Faḍīlat al-Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān,” Tarīq al Islam, 12 Mar 2005, accessed 4 Mar 2012, <http://ar.islamway.com/article/1101>.

110 Wā’il Qindīl, “Ḥulmak Ya Sheikh Ḥassān!” Al Shorouk, 1 Mar 2012.

After graduating he enrolled at the Higher Institute for Islamic Studies in Cairo, however left due to his military obligations, never to complete these studies. After finishing his term in the military, Muḥammad then settled in the city of Suez, giving lessons and preaching on Fridays. It was during this time that he began to travel to Saudi Arabia regularly, and began to attend lessons at the hands of many of their scholars including 'Abd al-'Aziz bin Bāz and Ibn 'Uthaymayn. During one celebratory occasion, Ḥassān was asked to give a speech in front of a large group of visiting Saudi scholars, who were so impacted by his words that they immediately rewarded him with a Doctorate degree. After completing his studies, he then moved to Saudi Arabia for a period, living in al-Qaṣīm and eventually teaching at the local branch of the Imam Muḥammad Sa'ūd University in the fields of Shari'a and Uṣūl al-Dīn.

Today, Muḥammad Ḥassān is the religious supervisor of the Rahma satellite channel as well as the newly established Al Rahma daily newspaper. He was also awarded a PhD from Al Azhar University's College of Islamic Calling after the defense of his dissertation “The Methodology of the Prophet Muḥammad in Calling the Other.”

### **Abu Ishāq Al Huwainī<sup>111</sup>**

Born Ḥijazī Muḥammad Sherif in the village of Huwein from the Kafr el Sheikh governate in June of 1956, he reportedly changed his name during his religious studies to imitate the Companion Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ.<sup>112</sup> He completed his education through the high school level in public government schools, and reportedly did not have any keen interest in religious studies until he reached the last year of high school. During his exam time, he visited his brother in Cairo and began attending the Friday sermons of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Kishk in the Ain Shams district of the city. He became intrigued by Kishk's attention to Hadith, and upon leaving a mosque happened upon a book by Al Albānī. He

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111 “Tarjamat al Sheikh Abi Ishāq al Ḥuwainī,” Mawqī' Faḍīlat al Sheikh Abi Ishāq al Ḥuwainī, 17 Jan 2009, accessed 3 Mar 2012, <http://www.alheweny.org/aws/play.php?catsmktba=661>.

112 According to al-Ḥuwainī's official website, he chose the name Abi Ishāq as it was the nickname of the Companion, which is accurate according to the Ṭabaqāt of Ibn Sa'd, see Muḥammad ibn Sa'd ibn Minī' al Zahrī, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 2001) Vol 3, P 127.

purchased this book and then began studying in detail the sciences of Hadith, relying almost exclusively on the works of Al Albānī.

Ḥijazī then enrolled for university studies and graduated with a degree in Spanish Literature from Ain Shams University, and in the evenings attended lectures in jurisprudence given by Muḥammad Najib al Muṭi'i as well as a number of random public religious lectures given by professors at Al Azhar, known in Arabic as the “Sheikh al 'Amūd” sessions. His high performance in school won him a scholarship to study in Spain but spent little time in the country and quickly returned as he became more religious.

There is an indication in his biography that at one point he traveled to Saudi Arabia to study and met with Bin Bāz, Ibn 'Uthaymayn, and Ibn Qa'ūd. None of this study, however, was consistent and is reported to have been nothing more than either a few short sessions or questions.

Although Abu Ishāq al Huwainī is reported to have been a student of Al Albānī, defended his rulings on a number of occasions, and even teaches his works to students, he only met his mentor twice: once for a few days at his home in Jordan in 1986 where he asked Al Albānī a number of detailed questions regarding Hadith sciences, and the second time in 1989 when he greeted him at the pilgrimage in Mecca.

### **Ḥāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Isma'īl<sup>113</sup>**

Born in the Cairo Metropolitan area in the village of Kafr Tuhurmus, Ḥāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Isma'īl is a lawyer by training and received his legal education from Cairo University. After spending much of his adult life at a private practice, in 2005 he began to enter public life when he was elected to the higher council of the Lawyer's Syndicate. In May of 2011, he officially announced his intentions to run for President of Egypt in the

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113 “Nubdha 'an al Sheikh Ḥāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Isma'īl,” Ḥāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Isma'īl: Ra'isan lil Jumhuriyya, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://www.hazemsalah.com/Pages/Pages/Details.aspx?ID=2>.

2012 elections and has received the support of most Salafī preachers as the primary Islamist candidate.

Much of Ḥāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Isma'īl's reputation and knowledge comes directly from the work of his father who was a prominent scholar at Al Azhar University and an active politician throughout the 1980s. Ḥāzim's official campaign website has as its second link a full description of his father's life and suggests that it was his father's influence and interest in politics that drew him to run for the presidency.

### **Muḥammad 'Abd al-Maqsūd<sup>114</sup>**

Alongside Muḥammad Hussein Ya'qūb, Muḥammad 'Abd al-Maqsūd is an older member of the Salafī movement in Egypt, born in 1947 in Manoufiyya. His education was entirely through secular public schools, and he achieved his bachelors, masters and doctorate in Agriculture from Al Azhar University, and worked for a period as an engineer in the Plant Disease Research and Prevention Center, under the Ministry of Agriculture.

Unfortunately, very little is known or published about the religious education of Muḥammad 'Abd al-Maqsūd, and the very small amount of information available on the internet suggests him as Egypt's top jurisprudence scholar, and that he has attended a number of religious conferences both in Egypt and internationally.

### **Muḥammad Isma'īl al Muqaddim<sup>115</sup>**

Born in Alexandria in 1952, Muḥammad Isma'īl al Muqaddim was educated in the country's public school system and received a Bachelor's in medicine and is currently completing higher studies in mental and nervous system illnesses at Alexandria University. During his undergraduate studies, he came into contact with Aḥmad Farīd, a

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114 "Muḥammad 'Abd al-Maqsūd," Nadā' al Iymān, accessed 4 Mar 2012, <http://www.al-eman.com/%06المحاضرون/عبد20%المقصود20/i3252&p13>.

115 Reḍā al Ṣamadī, "Tarjamat al Sheikh Muḥammad Isma'īl al Muqaddim," Al Da'wa al Salafiyya fī Miṣr, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://www.elsalaf.bravehost.com/102.htm>.

fellow Salafi preacher, and began to become interested in religious pursuits, particularly preaching to the society about their wrongs and how to improve them to get closer to the correct version of Islam.

After a brief period of interaction with the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jamā'a Islāmiyya, he then cooperated with Aḥmad Farīd and Sa'īd 'Abd al-'Adhīm to found the Salafi School of Alexandria in the early 1970s.

### **Aḥmad al Naqīb<sup>116</sup>**

Born in a village in the Daqahliyya governate, Aḥmad al Naqīb holds a Bachelor's Masters and Doctorate in Arabic Language and Linguistics from Cairo University, and spent much of his life moving around the Delta and in Cairo with his family as well as for his personal studies. He attended private lessons held by some of the country's most prominent lecturers on Fundamentals of Islamic Jurisprudence, including 'Abd al-Fattāh al Sheikh, the former President of Al Azhar University. He also claims to have listened to a lecture given by Al Albānī in his (Al Naqīb's) village, although there is no evidence that Al Albānī ever visited that area, and also regularly reads and listens to lectures given by Abu Ishāq al Huwainī and Aḥmad Farīd.

He currently lives in the Delta city of Mansoura where he teaches Islamic Studies at the College of Education at the local university. He also gives a number of weekly lessons and delivers the Friday sermon in a popular Salafī mosque in the city.

### **Muḥammad Sa'īd Raslān<sup>117</sup>**

Unfortunately, very little is known about the life of Muḥammad Sa'īd Raslan, only that he was born in 1955 in the Manoufiya city of Ashmoun. His education was public, and he received his Bachelor's in medicine from Al Azhar University. Later, he

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116 "Tarjamat al Sheikh al Duktūr Aḥmad 'Abd al-Rahmān al Naqīb," Mawqī' al Basīra, 1 Jul 2008, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://www.albasira.net/cms/play.php?catsmktba=732>.

117 "Sīrat al Sheikh wa Ma'loumāt 'an Ḥayātihi," Mawqī' Faḍīlat al Sheikh Muḥammad Sa'īd Raslān, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://www.rslan.com/targma.php>.



then obtained a Masters and Doctorate in Hadith Sciences, making him an exception to the general rule discussed above that most of the first group of Salafis in the country received no formal religious education.

He currently travels around the countryside giving lectures on religion, as well as delivers the Friday sermons at his home mosque.

### **Ayman Ṣaydaḥ<sup>118</sup>**

One of the youngest of the Salafī preachers, Ayman Ṣaydaḥ is from the Daqahliyya governate and was according to his biography known locally as a famous soccer player. He obtained his Bachelor's in commerce in 1988 and then traveled to Saudi Arabia to begin his “true path of religious studies.” Among his influences and teachers were Bin Bāz and ibn 'Uthaymayn, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Kishk, Abu Ishāq al Ḥuwainī, Muḥammad Ḥassān, Muḥammad Ṣafwat Nūr al Dīn, and Muḥammad Ḥussein Ya'qūb.

His first preaching attempts were at a Salafī-controlled mosque in 1995 in the 'Izbat al Nakhl neighborhood of Cairo, and he has continued to preach Friday sermons in the 10<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan City as well as the Al Imān Mosque in Cairo. Ayman also works as an accountant on the side until, as he states, he can reach the financial point where he no longer has to work and can focus entirely on religious studies.

### **Māzin Al-Sirsāwī<sup>119</sup>**

Māzin Muḥammad Al Sirsāwī was born in the village of Bani 'Āmir, close to the city of Zaqāzīq in the governate of Sharqiyya, and has spent the majority of his life in the Zaqāzīq area. He focused the earlier portion of his life in the study of Qur'ān, memorizing it and reciting it for the local radio station while he was a teenager. Reportedly during a reading of Al Albānī's Hadith he decided to change his focus to the

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118 “Tarjamat al Sheikh Ayman Saydaḥ,” Muntadā Ana Salafī, 26 May 2011, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://anasalafy.forumegypt.net/t33-topic>.

119 “Tarjamat al-Duktūr Māzin Sirsāwī Ḥafidhahu Allah,” Ana al-Muslim, 9 Sep 2007, accessed 23 May 2012, <http://www.muslim.net/vb/showthread.php?250246-ترجمة-الدكتور-مازن-السرساوي-حفظه-الله>.

detailed study of Hadith.

His education was through the local Azhari schools, and he entered the Zaqāzīq branch of Al Azhar for university, at the college of Usūl al Dīn and Da'wa. He completed his doctorate from the same university, and eventually began teaching, where he currently holds a position as Associate Professor of Hadith at Al Azhar University, Zaqāzīq branch. His biography reports most of his teachers as Egyptians including Aḥmad Mu'īd 'Abd al-Karīm, Abu Ishāq al Huwainī, Muḥammad 'Amr 'Abd al-Laṭīf, Muḥammad Ḥussein Ya'qūb, and Muḥammad Maḥmūd Abu Hashim.

### **Abd al-Mun'im al-Shaḥḥāt<sup>120</sup>**

Another member of the Alexandria School, Abd al-Mun'im al Shaḥḥāt was born in the Egyptian coastal city of Baltim in the Kafr al Sheikh governate and graduated with a degree in electronic engineering from Alexandria University in 1993. During his college years he became highly attached to the *Da'wa Salafiyya*, studying with a number of their prominent preachers including Yāsser al-Burhāmī. He has written a number of articles in the group's official newsletter, al Bayān, and was responsible for the management of the Salaf Voice website before reaching his current position as the official media spokesman of the *Da'wa Salafiyya*.

Al Shaḥḥāt ran for parliament in 2011, however lost in the recount. He currently gives a number of lectures in mosques throughout Alexandria as well as on Salafi satellite channels.

### **Muḥammad Ḥussein Ya'qūb<sup>121</sup>**

One of the older members of the Salafi movement, Muḥammad Ḥussein Ya'qūb was born in 1955 in the village of Mo'atamadiya in the Giza Governate. This is currently

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120 "Man Howa al Sheikh 'Abd al-Mon'eim al Shaḥḥāt?" Fursān al Sunna, 12 Feb 2011, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://www.forsanelhaq.com/showthread.php?t=278524>.

121 "T'arraf 'ala al Sheikh," Al Mawqī' al Rasmī li Faḍīlat al Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥussein Ya'qūb, accessed 9 Apr 2012, <http://www.yaqob.com/web2/index.php/maqalat/maqal/417>.

an urban neighborhood on the Western outskirts of Cairo, however in the 1950s very little development existed on the Western banks of the Nile and the area was an isolated farming village. The oldest male in his family, his father was reported to be very religious, establishing the *Jam'iyya Shar'iyya* branch for the area. However, there was no indication that he took religious lessons and he completed his education through the secular school system.

For his university studies, he entered into the College of Education and graduated with a primary teaching degree. However, he quickly found work in Saudi Arabia as a school teacher, where he lived for five years from 1980 – 1985. It was during this time, according to his biography, that he seriously began his religious studies. After 1985, he returned to Egypt, however he frequently visited Saudi Arabia for work as well as study. He studied with 'Abd al-'Azīz bin Bāz from 1982-1985, attending his lessons after morning prayer, spent a period of six months with Ibn 'Uthaymayn in 1990, attended the Friday prayers and visited the home of 'Abd Allah ibn Qa'ūd. He also attended the lessons of many other individuals however not regularly, the majority of whom were from Saudi Arabia with a few from Egypt such as Usāma Muḥammad 'Abd al-'Adhīm al Shāfi'ī and Rajā'ī al Masrī al Mekkī. At the bottom of his biography, it is interesting to note that he lists among his teachers Muḥammad Nāṣir al Dīn Al Albānī, whom he merely saw at pilgrimage and spoke with him on the phone twice.

## **Conclusions**

In conclusion, by far the greatest advancement of the Salafī since their modern appearance in the Egyptian landscape was their entry into politics following the 2011 political uprising and the overthrow of the Mubarak regime. This shift would mean that Salafis are no longer speaking only in village mosques or the crowded neighborhoods of the capital, but also under the dome of the Parliament and in high-ranking ministerial positions. Their legal opinions would therefore also now become center-stage, as they begin to enter into the national discourse.

## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **Legal Opinions**

This chapter discusses the legal opinions of the Salafi movement in a number of different fields of Islamic thought including their approach to democracy, the application of Shari'a, economics, women's rights, non-Muslims, Al Azhar, the Shi'a, as well as arts and leisure. These subjects were chosen as they represent the key issues towards the establishment of a future Egyptian state, one that, according to Salafis as mentioned in the introduction, should be staunchly Islamic. This Islamic nature must be more carefully defined. While their lack of formal organization creates some difference in the views of individual preachers, the opinions below reflect a general representation of those who self-identify as Salafi leaders as well as those who have a large television and speaking presence.

### **Democracy**

The definition of democracy for the Salafi movement is focused on the understanding of the source of governmental power and law. If law and power is derived from or determined by human sources, then it is considered to be forbidden. Power must be drawn entirely from God, as only He can issue the law and it is from Him that all power is derived.<sup>122</sup>

Participation in a democratic society, however, can be divided clearly into two periods: before and after the 2011 Revolution and the existence of Salafi political parties. Before the Revolution, most Salafi preachers strongly forbade the participation in democracy. Abu Ishāq al-Ḥuwainī stated in an interview with Al Furqān Magazine that politics was a government ploy to draw power away from Islamic movements and should be avoided. He also chastised the Muslim Brotherhood for their attempts to form democratic coalitions.<sup>123</sup> Muḥammad Isma'īl al Muqaddim stated that although Islam

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122 "Munāqḥara M. 'Abd al-Mun'im al Shaḥḥāt wa D. 'Amr Ḥamzāwī," YouTube video, 1:59:41, from a public debate, posted by "isofts." 9 Jul 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqIbLqCxbiA>.

123 "Ḥiwār Ma' Majallat al Furqān 2," Mawqī' Faḍīlat al Sheikh Abi Ishāq al Ḥuwainī, 17 Jan 2009, accessed 19 Mar 2012, <http://www.alheweny.org/aws/play.php?catsmktba=664>.

includes both the religion and the state,<sup>124</sup> it also “refuses democracy entirely because it does not agree with our theology or culture”<sup>125</sup> and that it turns the people into gods.<sup>126</sup>

Following the Revolution, a number of individuals such as Wagdy Ghuneim have continued to promote the concept that any participation in the political process is forbidden, and that the Salafis should focus on their religious message and ignore the draw of politics. In a recording, he stated that the creation of Salafi political parties, including Al Nour, marked the beginning of the end of the Salafi cause in Egypt. Continued political controversy and the willingness to alter their principles for political gain particularly in terms of a relationship with Israel would lead to the Salafis being rejected by the general population, weakening their position in the country and reducing their ability to call Muslims to the true version of Islam.<sup>127</sup> Muḥammad Saʿīd Raslān also kept this position, calling all public uprisings part of a Masonic conspiracy to destroy the religion of Islam, with democracy as its method.<sup>128</sup>

However, most other members of the movement including those listed above such as Muḥammad Ḥassān<sup>129</sup> and Muḥammad Ismaʿīl al Muqaddim<sup>130</sup> have changed their opinions entirely. They now state that participation in the Egyptian political system is required in order for the Salafis to reach their goals and many have become advocates of

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124 “Al Sheikh Muḥammad Ismaʿīl al Muqaddim al Islām Dīn wa Dawla,” YouTube video, 48:54, from a public conference, posted by kawsu24.” 28 Apr 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouF80qzaeAQ>.

125 Muḥammad Ismaʿīl al Muqaddim. “Ḥawl Dukhūl al Barlamān 2005.” Audio Lecture, accessed 19 Mar 2012, [http://www.anasalafy.com/play.php?catsmktba=13326\\_11:00](http://www.anasalafy.com/play.php?catsmktba=13326_11:00).

126 *Ibid.*, 14:40 - 15:00.

127 “Al Sheikh Wajdy Ghuneim Hizb al Nour Al Salafi wa Bidāyāt al Suqūt,” YouTube video, 8:03, private recording, posted by “wagdy0000.” 23 Dec 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkZE9iIpYWg>.

128 “Al Māsūniyya wal Thawrāt,” YouTube video, 1:15:45, recording of Friday prayer on 11 Mar 2011, posted by “inab24.” 11 Mar 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hby-dfGaHUG&feature=relmfu>.

129 “Mumkin – Khairy Ramaḍān – CBC 15 – 11 – 2011,” YouTube video, 1:24:18, from the television show Mumkin on the CBC satellite channel episode 15 Nov 2011, posted by “CBCEgypt.” 15 Nov 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-1FTLnQ1p0U>.

130 “D. Muḥammad Ismaʿīl al Muqaddim Yulakhkhas fī Daqīqa wa Niṣf Limādha Dakhal Hizb al Nour fī al 'Amal al Siyyāsī,” YouTube video, 1:47, from an election conference, posted by “2010aboabdo.” 15 Dec 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43jS0faQNLI>.

the Salafī party al Nour.<sup>131</sup> While this is a clear attempt to take advantage of the now open political system and utilize religion for political goals, the Salafis who changed their opinions argue that this was because in the past there was no benefit to participation as the results were predetermined. Now, they argue, this has changed and therefore they are required to participate. The *Majlis Shūrā al Ulamā'* in its first official statement encouraged Egyptians to vote in favor of the constitutional amendments, and that there is no religious prohibition to vote in the elections of the People's Assembly, Consultative Assembly, or the Presidency.<sup>132</sup>

The same division and change of opinions can be seen in rulings regarding political protests, with most preachers condemning the practice before the Revolution only to change after the events became clear that the Salafis stood to gain politically. They even held their own protests in Tahrir Square on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011, bringing thousands of supporters from around the country to call for the immediate application of Islamic Law and reject calls to alter the Islamic nature of the state.<sup>133</sup>

This oscillating position on democracy and participation in the political process has resulted in a large conflict both within the Salafī movement as well as with the rest of Egyptian society. 'Abd al-Mun'eim al Shaḥḥāt for example was defeated in the 2011-2012 parliamentary elections mainly due to his negative comments on democracy and protests made days before the election.<sup>134</sup>

The pictures that Salafis paint of an ideal Islamic in general is one of a theocracy,

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131 "Kalima Khaṭīra lil Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān 'ala Manaṣṣat Hizb al Nour," YouTube video, 9:02, from a public protest in Tahrir Square, posted by "yaqeennews." 18 Oct 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11veOLO0fd8>, and

"Sheikh Ayman Ṣaydaḥ fi Kalima Rahība fi Mu'tamar Hizb al Nour Qalyūb," YouTube video, 32:40, from an election conference, posted by "tareksalafi." 21 Jan 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHVB2M7Aao>.

132 "Al Bayān al Awwal li Majlis Shūrā al Ulemā'," Majlis Shūrā al Ulemā', 2 Mar 2012, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://www.shora-alolamaa.com/eg/play.php?catsmktba=37>.

133 Anthony Shadid. "Islamists Flood Square in Cairo in Show of Strength." The New York Times, 29 Jul 2011, and

Aḥmad Ibrahim. "Jum'at al Islamiyyīn...Resā'il lil Dākhil wa Lil Khārij." Al Wafd, 31 Jul 2011, and

134 Fahmy Huweidy, "*Al Mujtama' Asdara Ḥukmahu*." Al Shorouk, 8 Dec 2011.

ruled by the Imam or *Khalīfa*. This *Khalīfa's* characteristics and duties are entirely from a classical viewpoint, ignoring modern definitions of the state: he must be Muslim, male, just, knowledgeable, strong of opinion, with strong character traits, and from the Quraish tribe.<sup>135</sup> He is responsible for protecting the religion, removing innovation and oppressing innovators, preparing the army, protecting the borders, upholding moral standards.<sup>136</sup> The methods of selection of this *Khalīfa* could be through direct appointment, a coup d'état, or through a selection committee made of the brightest and most religious members of society.<sup>137</sup>

Opposition to this Imam is not allowed unless he issues a law that clearly violates the rules of Islam. The method of this opposition takes the form of “advice,” which ironically is described as obeying the ruler further by praying behind him and accompanying him in war, in the hopes that increasing good deeds around the leader will encourage him to return to the correct path of God.<sup>138</sup>

### **Application of Shari'a and Islamic Law**

The application of Islamic Law or Shari'a is considered one of the main goals and is the main driving factor for their entry and participation in politics. In speeches given at electoral conferences, preachers such as Māzin al Sirsāwī<sup>139</sup> and Hazīm Shūmān<sup>140</sup> have claimed that the only way that Egypt and the Muslim world will succeed is if the Shari'a is immediately applied. Despite this wide support, there are very few specifics given as to what this law actually consists of or how it is to be applied, representing one of the weakest points of Salafi discourse. The most probable reason for this lack of definition is the fact that most speakers in the movement have no formal educational experience in the

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135 'Ādel ibn Yūssef al 'Azāzī, Muḥammad Ṣafwat Nour al Dīn and Abu Ishāq al Huwainī, *Tamām al Minna fi Fiqh al Kitāb wa Ṣaḥīḥ al Sunna* (Fayoum, Egypt: Dar Subul al Salam, 2011) 4, 563 – 565.

136 *Ibid.*, 4, 568 - 69.

137 *Ibid.*, 4, 560 - 563.

138 *Ibid.*, 4, 565 – 568.

139 “Al Azhar wa Mawqifuhu min Taṭbiq al Shari'a,” YouTube video, 43:50, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by “m4islam1.” 18 Apr 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dT-E0WezD9M>.

140 “Hazim Shoumān Ṭawq al Najā al Waḥīd Huwa Taṭbīq al Shari'a al Islamiyya,” YouTube video, 7:16, from Al Nour electoral conference, posted by “Yawm7News.” 26 Dec 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4l41GD2Wu4>.

fields of law, and that their avoidance of politics meant remaining limited to issues of worship. Many audiences who are keen to listen to their speeches are also not prepared for complicated legal discussions in areas such as torts and rather prefer to hear powerful sermons that deal with more abstract religious issues.

The only area of the Shari'a that receives extensive discussion from preachers is the application of the *hudūd* or criminal punishments for murder, stealing, adultery, rebellion, public drunkenness, or apostasy. These punishments, which range from whipping to stoning, exile, execution, and public crucifixion have been the subject of countless Salafi discussions, and were one of the main electoral subjects discussed by Salafi candidate Abu Isma'īl.<sup>141</sup> These statements are equally abstract, and presented almost as a cure-all for societal problems.

When it comes to the current law available, Salafi preachers also tend to take an immediately negative stance. Abu Ishāq al Ḥuwainī forbids entering law school, claiming that it was learning how to apply the law of man as opposed to that of God, and the only area of law that is acceptable is that of personal status.<sup>142</sup> Preachers often also ignore efforts of modern Egyptian legal figures to create modern applications of Shari'a such as those of Makhlūf al Minyāwī<sup>143</sup> and 'Abd al-Razzāq al Sanhūrī.<sup>144</sup> Aḥmad al Naqīb once mentioned the efforts of Ṣūfī Abu Ṭālib<sup>145</sup> as one of the most powerful attempts to introduce Islamic law into Egyptian law, however quickly stated that this movement was

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141 "Rasūl Allah 'Allamana, Ḥalqa Raqm 13 – Taṭbiq al Shari'a," YouTube video, 12:34, from an episode of The Prophet Taught Us on Al Nas satellite channel, posted by "HazemSalahTV." 13 Aug 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4b9le9QIHye>.

142 "Abu Ishāq al Ḥuwainī: Dukhūl Kuliyyat al Ḥuqūq Ḥarām," YouTube video, 1:28, from private mosque lecture, posted by "MrAbkareeno." 4 Nov 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDhHYBZYTig>.

143 Makhlūf al Minyāwī (d. 1878) was an Egyptian religious scholar who was asked by Khedive Isma'īl to review from Malikite legal perspective Rifā' al Ṭaṭawī's translation of French law.

144 'Abd al-Razzāq al Sanhūrī (1895 – 1971) was an Egyptian legal scholar who worked to modernize Egypt's legal system, working with the committee that promulgated the country's civil code in 1949.

145 Ṣūfī Abu Ṭālib (1925 – 2008) was an Egyptian legal scholar and politician, who served as the Speaker of the People's Assembly from 1978 to 1983. In cooperation with Al Azhar, he formed a committee to review Egypt's legal system, proposing to integrate clear elements of Islamic law into the existing system. However, this panel was dissolved and the project was never completed.



squashed by the Sadat regime and provided no details as to what the project entailed.<sup>146</sup>

A more detailed approach to the methodology used by Salafis in the application of Shari'a is given at the beginning of the fourth chapter on methodology in the section entitled "The Nature of Shari'a."

### **Islamic Economic System and Banking**

The foundation of an Islamic economy according to the Salafi movement is the removal of the practice of *ribā*, or interest in banking practices. This is usually backed by quoting the Hadith of the Prophet Muḥammad on the issue which states: "Every loan that brings a benefit is *ribā*," even though this Hadith was determined to be weak by Al Albānī.<sup>147</sup> Once this *riba* is removed, the banking system can be determined by the Salafi movement to be Islamic.

Other economic problems can be solved through the application of traditional Islamic instruments such as the payment of required alms, with many Salafi preachers not elaborating on how such an economic system should function in detail. For example, Abu Ishāq al Ḥuwainī stated in an interview on Al Ḥikma satellite channel that to solve the Egyptian financial crisis the government should create a law forcing all Muslims to pay their mandatory charity or *Zakāt* and non-Muslims to pay a special poll tax or *jizya*. These collected funds, placed into a special account at an Islamic bank so as to avoid any form of *ribā*, would act as an alternative to loans from the international community, which should be avoided.<sup>148</sup>

Additionally, in response to threats from the United States government to cut-off direct military aid, Muḥammad Ḥassān suggested the establishment of a one trillion

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146 "Taṭbīq al Shari'a," private lecture by Aḥmad al Naqīb, 2010.

147 Muḥammad Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī, *Da'if al Jami'a al Saghir wa Ziyadatuhu* (Beirut: Al Maktab al Islami), 617, no 4244.

148 Aziza Abu Bakr, "Al Sheikh Al Ḥuwainī, 'alá al Ḥukūma Sann Qānūn li Jibāyat al Zakāt." *Al Shabab Magazine*, 21 May 2011.

Egyptian Pound fund to collect donations that would replace US aid. This fund, although heavily criticized by economists and politicians from across the political spectrum was vocally supported by the Sheikh of Al Azhar<sup>149</sup> and the head of the Sufi orders in Egypt.<sup>150</sup> After a short period of media dialogue, the issue of the fund has gone silent and the funds gathered have gone unused. Both of these examples show the lack of economic ideas available from the Salafī movement, and that beyond traditional Islamic concepts of funding they have no alternative vision.

Beyond financial practices members of the Salafī movement also wish to curb other businesses that they see as a threat to their vision of morality. Alcohol sellers, nightclubs, and butchers who sell pork are all considered by the Salafī movement to be corruptors of the society, and that these practices must be banned in their entirety for the Islamic economy to be complete.

Since the 2011 Revolution, a number of liberal media outlets have pointed-out the Salafī opposition to foreign tourists visiting the country's beaches. Their bikinis caused a moral crisis for Egyptians and disrupted society as a whole. The solutions provided to this have ranged from a requirement for all women in the country, including visitors and non-Muslims, to abide to an Islamic dress code or simply the creation of special beaches that allow for conservative families to visit. Liberal commentators claimed that this view would have a detrimental effect on the country's billion-dollar tourism industry. Salafī preacher Yāssir Burhāmī responded to these claims stating that foreign tourism could be replaced with Islamic tourism, citing Turkey as a successful example.<sup>151</sup> Salafī presidential candidate Hāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Isma'īl has also expressed similar claims as part of his campaign.<sup>152</sup> Both figures, however, do not define how tourism should be changed

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149 Muḥammad 'Abd al-Khāliq, "Al Azhar Yatabanna Mubādarat 'La lil Ma'ūna al Amrikiyya" Al Ahram, 17 Feb 2012, First Page.

150 Lu'ay Ali, "Al Sharif wa al Qasabī Yuṭliqān Ṣundūq al 'Izza bi Ra's Māl 1000 Millyār Junayh li Inqādh Iqtisād Mistr," Al Yawm Al Sabī', 16 February 2012.

151 "Al Siyāḥa al Islamiyya fi Turkiyā," YouTube video, 7:16, from an interview with Dream TV, posted by "tawphique." 17 Sep 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2u6oHuukOvw>.

152 "Al Siyāḥa fi al Dawla al Islamiyya fi 'Ahd al Sheikh Hāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Isma'īl," YouTube video,

in detail, leaving the issue unclear.

## Women's Rights

The approach of Salafis to the issues of women in modern Egyptian society is largely one based around the concept of tribulation or *fitna*, and that women constitute the greatest tribulation in the world for men. Therefore, interaction with women should be avoided at all costs to reduce occurrence of this tribulation, leading to claims from preachers such as Muḥammad Ḥassān that all women who leave the house not wearing proper Islamic clothing are intentionally trying to destroy men.<sup>153</sup>

In terms of the workplace, the Salafi figures looked at in this study universally agree that the position of the woman is one of a homemaker, raising the children which will compose the future generations and therefore she is one of the most important foundations of the Islamic society. She should in general not work, and should only leave the home when she is escorted by a male member of the family, or a *maḥram*. Many Salafi preachers lament the position of women in modern society, considering their participation in the workforce as detrimental to future Muslims. Muḥammad Ismaʿīl al Muqaddim described this through the phenomenon of the “Children of the Keys,” or families where children must carry keys to school, as they will return to home alone until their parents return from work.<sup>154</sup>

However, some such as Muḥammad Ḥassān have taken a more nuanced stance and stated that a woman can work if it is a necessity for the family, and that arguably the high poverty rates in Egypt mean that most women need to work. However, this must be done within the limits of the Shari'a, meaning that she must be fully veiled and wear the

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14:44, from the show Huna al 'Āsima on the CBC satellite channel, posted by “islamloveforever1.” 22 Sep 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f\\_MIF\\_qlnCk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_MIF_qlnCk).

153 “Fitnat al Nisā' fi Ḥijāb al Ra's wa al Bintāl al Dayyiq,” Youtube video, 3:17, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “wesso12000.” 25 Sep 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrBloxwyLyE>.

154 “Aṭfāl al Mafāṭīḥ!!! Al Duktūr Muḥammad Ismaʿīl al Muqaddim,” YouTube video, 4:19, from the Ana Salafy video library, posted by “0117290230.” 28 Dec 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fepw5qcCngw>.

*niqāb*, and not interact with men.<sup>155</sup> Hāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Ismaʿīl in a television interview mentioned that a woman's life is divided into two periods: one during which she is busy with the job of raising her children, and the other when she is not busy. During both periods she has the freedom to work, however it must always be under the restrictions of the Shari'a.<sup>156</sup>

Some figures in the Salafī movement have even stretched the ban on female interaction in the society to its farthest limits, forbidding women from even attending Friday prayers in the mosque, which is traditionally required only of men. Abu Ishāq Al Huwainī is one of the few preachers that allow women to go to the mosque on Friday for multiple reasons including that she is usually trapped in her own home and this is the only time that women can sit together without spreading rumors and talking about men behind their backs. This is necessary to renew their faith; otherwise they would fall into temptation.<sup>157</sup>

Another major women's rights issue that has been the focus of serious debate with the Salafī movement and the remainder of Egyptian society has been that of the full-face veil, or the *niqāb*. In 1990 Ismaʿīl Maṣṣūr, a professor at Cairo University published a work that argued for the forbidding of the *niqāb* in Islam, and that it is nothing more than a mere cultural icon that existed prior to the spread of the religion.<sup>158</sup> This book and its subsequent re-publishings in 2005 and 2008 combined with a public scandal involving the former Sheikh of Al Azhar Muḥammad Ṭaṭāwī insiting that a female elementary student remove the veil during a media tour to bring the issue to the religious forefront.<sup>159</sup>

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155 "Fatwā 'Amal al Mar'a," YouTube video, 5:11, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by "lamrie3." 5 Apr 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgKd6zF3ToM>.

156 "Amal al Mar'a wa Dawruha fi al Mujtama'," YouTube video, 9:06, from CBC satellite channel, posted by "HazemSalahTV." 2 Dec 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_b5d2Tgdy9o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_b5d2Tgdy9o).

157 "Hal al Mar'a Takhruj ila al Masjid li Ṣalāt al Jum'a am Tuṣalli al Dhuhr fi Baytiha?" Mawqa Faḍīlat al Sheikh Abi Ishāq al Huwainī, 17 May 2010, accessed 25 Mar 2012, <http://www.alheweny.org/aws/play.php?catsmktba=9104>.

158 Ismaʿīl Maṣṣūr, *Tadhkīr al Aṣḥāb bi Tahrim al Niqāb* (Cairo: Private Publication, 1990).

159 Aḥmad al Buhairī, "Sheikh al Azhar Yujbir Ṭaliba 'ala Khal' Niqābiha," Al Masry al Yawm, 5 Oct 2009, Hot Topics Section, accessed 6 Apr 2012, <http://www.almazry-alyoum.com/article2.aspx?ArticleID=228178>.

Salafis according to Mansour's study have universally agreed that the *niqāb* is required under most circumstances, based almost entirely on the opinions of the schools of classical Islamic jurisprudence. Even in circumstances where jurists ruled that wearing the face veil was *mustahab*, or preferred but not required, they state that it would be better to stay on the safe side and wear it. These are the recorded opinions of Muḥammad Hussein Ya'qūb,<sup>160</sup> Abu Ishāq al Huwainī,<sup>161</sup> and Muḥammad Ḥassān.<sup>162</sup> Muḥammad Isma'īl al Muqaddim wrote a book whose introduction was written by none other than the Mufti of Saudi Arabia that violently attacked those who denounce the *niqāb* as well as the book stated above.<sup>163</sup>

Aside from these specifics, there are large areas of women's rights that are rarely mentioned in the Salafi discourse including education, health, legal rights in marriage and divorce, and children's rights. Abu Ishāq al Huwainī, however, once commented that ignorance is rampant amongst women and that no matter how much she studied, a woman would always remain ignorant because knowledge is for men and men alone.<sup>164</sup> Wagdy Ghuneim has also been banned from a number of countries due to his claim that female circumcision is a religious requirement.<sup>165</sup>

### Non-Muslims in the Islamic State

Salafis believe that all non-Muslims present in the state are *Dhimmī*, or

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160 "Mulūk Kull al Ta'sīl al Fiqhī fi Mas'alat al Niqāb Faḍīlat al Sheikh Muḥammad Hussein Ya'qūb," YouTube video, 2:02, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by "mando695." 9 Oct 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqT6tM411KI>.

161 "Hal al Niqāb Wājib am Mustahabb?" YouTube video, 7:40, from al Huwainī's website, posted by "eslamelsherbiny." 27 Oct 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maz-Vwn3qkw&feature=fvst>.

162 "Ḥukm al Niqāb fi al Islām," YouTube video, 10:13, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by "1981musta." 13 Oct 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpHk3DHRQ2s>.

163 Muḥammad Isma'īl al Muqaddim, *Dafa' al Šā'il 'alā Mashrū'iyyat al Hijāb al Kāmil* (Alexandria, Egypt: Dār al Khulifā' al Rāshiden, 2009) 245 – 247.

164 "Abu Ishāq al Huwainī Yasubb al Nisā' Jami'an," YouTube Video, 1:27, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by "kshaaf2." 3 Jun 2011 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w65CZFPVRSg>.

165 "Ḥukūmat Tunis al Islamiyya Raddan 'ala Ghuneim: Khitān al Ināth Laysa min Thaqāfatina," Al Shorouk News, 16 Feb 2012, Nass wa Ḥayāt section.

individuals under the protection of Islam.<sup>166</sup> Their position as citizens is questionable, as Salafis do not affirm the modern concept of citizenship, as this is not mentioned in the original texts of Islam. This idea was introduced to the country's constitution as part of a conspiracy by the regime to destroy the Islamic nature of the state.<sup>167</sup> In return for their stay in the country, many Salafi preachers believe in the application of the *Jizya*, or the poll tax prescribed in the Qur'ān<sup>168</sup> however abolished in Egypt under the reign of Sa'īd Pasha in 1855.<sup>169</sup>

To affirm this separation, Salafi preachers such as Yāssir Burhāmī,<sup>170</sup> Aḥmad al Naqīb,<sup>171</sup> and Muṣṭafa al-‘Adawī<sup>172</sup> have all stated that it is forbidden for a Christian to hold the office of President because they have no position in overseeing the affairs of Muslims. They are simply neighbors that should be respected as long as they continue to respect Muslims. These same speakers all agree, however, that Christian and other non-Muslims in the country have the right to their own personal status laws, stating that they may be separate but equal.

Direct personal relationships between Muslims and Christians in Egypt are defined by Salafis through the traditional concept of *walā'* and *barā'*, considered by

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166 *Dhimmī* is a term meaning “protected,” and was a term developed by classical Islamic scholars to define the relationship between the Muslim state and its non-Muslim members.

167 “Muḥammad Isma’īl al Muqaddim wa al Muwāṭana,” YouTube video, 1:40, from Ana Salafy website, posted by “montiman1972.” 22 Jul 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6Youf\\_J7T4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6Youf_J7T4).

168 Qur’ān 9:29. “Fight those who believe not in God nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by God and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizyah with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.” Translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

{قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ}

169 Ayman Aḥmad Mahmūd, *Al Jiziya fi Misr* (Cairo: Supreme Council of Culture, 1999).

170 “‘Adm Qabūl Ra’is Messihī li Misr la Ya’taraḍ ma’ al Dīmuqratiyya,” YouTube video, 0:48, from Al Nahar satellite channel, posted by “amrmagdy2008.” 10 Dec 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0AL13jtANA>.

171 “Hal Mumkin Messihī Yabqa Ra’is Misr? Wa Shahid Radd al Sheikh Aḥmad al Naqīb,” YouTube video, 2:46, from al Basira online channel, posted by “7910bebo.” 17 Feb 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LTNYMYdMS0>.

172 “Al Radd ‘alā man Yujīz Tarshiḥ al Naṣarā li Ri’āsat al Jumhuriyya,” YouTube video, 5:17, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “sms4all.” 15 Jan 2012, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m\\_E25HNw3pI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_E25HNw3pI).

individuals such as Muḥammad Ḥassān to be one of the primary foundations of Islam.<sup>173</sup> Muslims are not allowed to celebrate any festivals that have non-Islamic undertones such as Easter and Christmas, nor congratulate non-Muslims on the occasion. They also may not support or participate in any official religious activities of non-Muslims, such as going to Church. For example, many Salafī preachers condemned the Mufti of Egypt Ali Goma' for his attendance of Coptic events but said nothing when Hāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Isma'īl attended the funeral of Coptic Pope Shenouda.<sup>174</sup>

Many preachers feel that there also must be a clear visual difference between Muslims and non-Muslims. This can be seen in the Salafī attachment to the requirement that Muslim men grow out their beards and trim their mustaches. This is due to the fact that, in their opinion, by shaving your beard you are making yourself to look like non-Muslims, and there must be something to differentiate yourself and others in the society to avoid being cursed by God for associating yourself with those going to hell.<sup>175</sup> Abu Ishāq al Huwainī compared growing the beard to a national flag, and stated that those who shave their beards could easily be confused with a homosexual. In the same presentation, he also states that those who reject the requirement of growing a beard have left the religion of Islam.<sup>176</sup>

Even the question of loving Christians as a fellow Egyptian became a main issue in modern debates, when on one major satellite program a Salafī guest and caller claimed that he will respect Christians; however he cannot love them as they differ in their theology. This resulted in calls from Sufī preacher al-Ḥabīb 'Ali al-Jafīr rejecting the concept and stating that if God allowed Muslim men to marry Christian and Jewish

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173 “Al Walā' wa al Barā' al Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān,” YouTube video, 7:27, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “waelabouseria.” 20 Feb 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKCJS8R-Zkg>.

174 Muḥammad Isma'īl, “Hāzim Abu Isma'īl Yushārik fi Azza' al Bābā Shanūda,” Al Yawm al Sabi'a, 18 Mar 2012, accessed 7 Apr 2012, <http://www.youm7.com/News.asp?NewsID=630095>.

175 Muḥammad Isma'īl al Muqaddim, *Adillat Tahrīm Ḥalq al Liḥiya* (Kuwait: Dār al Arqam, 1985) and “Ḥukm Ḥalq al Liḥiya? Al Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān,” YouTube video, 9:57, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “kasthaleeb.” 24 Oct 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVrZdZhfos4>.

176 “Ḥukm al Liḥiya – Abu Ishāq al Huwainī,” YouTube video, 8:20, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “Bjaffal.” 22 Sep 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqUnNlZHPtE>.

women, then how could this be done without love? The following Friday, Abu Ishāq al Huwainī clearly rejected the concept again, stating that there is no love for non-Muslims in Islam.<sup>177</sup> In a public lecture, Muḥammad Saʿīd Raslān claimed that all those who love non-Muslims have left the religion.<sup>178</sup>

A prime example of this distrust and tension between the Salafis and Christians would be in the issue of the conversion of Christian women. In 2008 Wafā' Constantine, the wife of a preacher in the Buhaira governate, reportedly converted to Islam and fled her husband. She then was taken back into the custody of the Coptic Church and has not been seen in public since.<sup>179</sup> A similar chain of events occurred in 2010 with public school teacher Camilia Sheḥata.<sup>180</sup> Salafis have reacted to these events in various ways by establishing civil society groups and holding protests. In May of 2011 in the aftermath of the Revolution in the neighborhood in Imbaba this tension boiled over into violence, where Salafis attacked a church that was reportedly holding converted Christian 'Abīr Fakhrī. The resulting conflict ended with more than 15 deaths and 242 injuries, along with the burning of two churches and their attached community service buildings.<sup>181</sup>

### **Position of Al Azhar**

Most Salafi preachers see the country's official religious institution, Al Azhar, as one of the most important of its kind in the world, and as the primary educational source for Muslims around the world.<sup>182</sup> The imagery of Al Azhar from within the Salafi

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177 "Al Farq Bayna al-Bir wa al-Mawadda wa al-Ḥubb li Ahl al Kitāb al Yuhūd wa al Naṣṣārā wa Afṣaḥ Bayān lil Sheikh Abi Ishāq al Ḥuwainī Raddan 'alā Khairī Ramaḍān," YouTube video, 5:44, from a public lecture, posted by "waelabouseria." 17 Dec 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYbSbAUc-s8>.

178 "Al Walā' wa al Barā' lil Sheikh Muḥammad Saʿīd Raslān," Youtube video, 1:39:23, from a public lecture, posted by "inab24." 17 Feb 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofBW4ZOnQDY>.

179 Jamāl Jirjis al Mazāhim, "Al Kanīsa Tuqarrir 'Adam Dhuhūr Wafā' Quṣṭanṭīn Nihā'iyyan," Al Yawm Al Sabi'a, 15 November 2008.

180 Amira Howeidy, "The Camilia Conundrum," Al Ahram Weekly, 2 - 8 September 2010.

181 "Fi Natā'ij Taqrīr Maydānī Ḥawl Aḥdāth Imbāba," Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, 14 May 2011, accessed 5 April 2012, <http://eipr.org/pressrelease/2011/05/14/1165>.

182 "Qanāt al Nās Faṭḥ al Bārī Māzin al Sirsāwī Islāḥ al Azhar," YouTube video, 44:55, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by "alnastvchannel." 22 Mar 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56JrAvMBFgs>.



movement is however notably abstract; as a citadel of knowledge and the subject of pouring ovations.<sup>183</sup> Muḥammad Ḥassān, for example, sought approval from the Sheikh of Al Azhar Aḥmad Al Ṭayyib before continuing with his campaign to replace US aid with donations. Many written works by Salafis have also sought official approval from Al Azhar before publishing, proudly displaying the certificates and stating on the cover that they are accepted by their panels.<sup>184</sup> This acts primarily as a form of legitimacy for their works, and guarantees them a larger audience.

The attachment to Al Azhar for reasons of legitimacy is what has driven many in the movement such as Muḥammad Ḥassān to seek degrees from the institution. As was mentioned in Chapter 2, Māzin Sirsāwī, Muḥammad al Ṣaghīr, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and others proudly display their Azhari qualifications, with some refusing to appear in public without wearing their official uniforms.

However, although expressing an intense respect for the institution and place of Al Azhar in the Muslim World, the Salafis strongly attack many of the professors associated with the institution and have repeatedly called for their removal.<sup>185</sup> Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Maḥṣūd, for example, attacked al Tayyib's statement that the Salafis are the Kharijites of this age by stating that his appointment at Al Azhar was a mistake, due to the fact that he was a philosophy and theology major. According to him, the Sheikh of Al Azhar should only be someone well versed in jurisprudence.<sup>186</sup> The Grand Mufti ‘Ali Juma’ has also seen his fair share of attacks from the Salafis, with criticism focused mainly at his contradictory rulings, accusing him of radically changing his opinions upon his

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183 “Al Sheikh Khālīd al Jindī wa al Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān Yudāfi’ān ‘an al Azhar,” YouTube video, 2:57, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “azharitv.” 27 Oct 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeOtUxQEhQ>.

184 See Yāssir Burhāmī, *Faḍl al Ghani al Hamīd: Ta’alīqāt Hamma ‘alā Kitāb al Tawḥīd* (Alexandria, Egypt: Dar al Khulifa’ al Rashideen, 2009).

185 “Ra’ī Aḥad Mundharī al Tayyār al Salafī fī ‘Ulamā’ al Azhar,” YouTube video, 0:49, from Faḍfaḍa program on Al Nas satellite channel, posted by “rakiz1.” 19 May 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFrpbldvNJ>.

186 “Radd al Duktūr ‘Abd al-Maḥṣūd ‘alā al Ṭayyib,” YouTube video, 5:23, from Faḍfaḍa program on Al Nas satellite channel, posted by “abu7abiba.” 5 Apr 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npnzfnf\\_xSU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npnzfnf_xSU).

appointment to the position.<sup>187</sup>

Salafis also advocate heavily for the reform of Al Azhar, claiming that it had become part of the corrupt political regime and as a result of the Revolution should be cleansed. This should be done through financial independence and the introduction of a curriculum that more solidly integrates the Qur'ān and Sunna, avoiding the innovations of other Muslim groups particularly the Sufis and Shi'a.<sup>188</sup> Despite these criticisms, preachers such as al Huwainī have consistently ruled that an education at Al Azhar is still religiously permissible and represents the best hope for students to understand their religion and memorize the Qur'ān in a non-offensive setting, although the weak curriculum must be reinforced with outside lessons.<sup>189</sup>

### **Approach to the Shi'a**

Although Egypt reportedly has a small Shia population, which is less than one percent of the total Muslim population,<sup>190</sup> the influence of the Shi'a tends to draw some of the most powerful attention from the Salafī movement. Aḥmad al Naqīb has stated in public lectures that all forms of *bid'a* that exist in the country today have been brought by the *Shi'a*. Ibrahim Fawzi and Yāssīr Burhāmī have written a pamphlet comparing the Foundations of Jurisprudence between the Sunna and Shi'a sects, attacking the position of the Shi'a for their criticism of the Companions.<sup>191</sup>

In Ramadan of 2011, the Al Nas satellite channel ran a program entitled "Our

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187 "Radd al Sheikh Abi Ishāq al Ḥuwainī 'alā al Mufti," YouTube video, 9:20, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by "mkenawee." 18 Nov 2009, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bc02h3BT\\_I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bc02h3BT_I).

188 "Qanāt al Nās Faṭḥ al Bāri Māzin al Sirsāwī Iṣlāḥ al Azhar," YouTube video, 44:55, episode on Al Nas satellite channel broadcast 20 Mar 2011, posted by "alnastvchannel." 22 Mar 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56JrAvMBFgs&feature=relmfu> and "Qanāt al Nās Fatra Maftūḥa Maṣīrat Istiqlāl al Azhar," YouTube video, 56:09, episode on Al Nas satellite channel broadcast 7 May 2011, posted by "alnastchannel." 11 May 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7\\_N8pe6CEjE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_N8pe6CEjE).

189 "Kaifa Nu'allim al Banāt?" Mawqī' Faḍīlat al Sheikh Abi Ishāq al Ḥuwainī, 18 May 2010, accessed 24 Apr 2012, <http://www.alheweny.org/aws/play.php?catsmktba=9127>.

190 "Mapping the Global Muslim Population," The Pew Research Center: The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, October 2009, 8-11.

191 Ibrahim Fawzi, *Usūl al Shi'a bayn Ahl al Sunna wa al Shi'a* (Alexandria, Egypt: Dar al 'Aqeeda, 2003).

Theology...A Red Line” which brought on a number of Salafi preachers to attack the Shi'a. The stated goal of the program according to the introduction provided by the announcer on the first episode was to “call the Shi'a to the true religion of God, and to prevent Shi'a influence from spreading in Egyptian society.”<sup>192</sup> Each of the following thirty episodes of the program were divided into subjects with such titles as “The Prophet between the Greatness of the Sunna and the Attacks of the Shi'a,” “The Companions between the Respect of the Sunna and the Attacks of the Shi'a,” and “The Mut'a Marriage with the Shi'a.”

Salafi preacher Sa'īd 'Abd al-'Adhīm, who was the guest of the first episode, stated clearly that due to this negative position any reconciliation between the two sects according to the Salafi movement is obviously not possible. This is not due to a lack of compassion or effort from either side, but because there is a fundamental disagreement on theology, with some Salafis calling the Shi'a innovators. The only way to build a relationship with the Shi'a is if they abandon their beliefs.<sup>193</sup>

This radical position towards the Shi'a also has a direct effect on the Salafi approach to foreign relations. Islamist academic Muḥammad Selim al 'Awwa in his election campaign has called for a normalization of relations between Egypt and Iran, stating that Iran is a regional power that should be communicated with openly. This should also be done within the context of a greater reconciliation between the two sects.<sup>194</sup> The Iranian government has also responded positively to these calls, asking to place a permanent ambassador in Cairo and allow bilateral relations to grow.<sup>195</sup> The Salafis have universally rejected this effort, and also used their media outlets to attack al 'Awwa's position on this matter and claim that this alone makes him unsuitable for the

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<sup>192</sup> “Aqīdatuna Khaṭ Aḥmar.” Al Nas Satellite Channel, broadcast 2 August 2011. 1:00

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 8:00-10:00.

<sup>194</sup> “Muḥammad Selim al 'Awwa: Irān Muḍṭahada wa al-Farq bayn al-Sunna wa al-Shi'a Laysa Ḥāddan,” YouTube video, 4:16, from Al Tahrir satellite channel, posted by “Abudana2011.” 20 Jul 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqrT7VTakgQ>.

<sup>195</sup> Richard Spencer, “Egypt and Iran Forging Closer Links with Ambassadors Plan,” The Telegraph, 19 April 2011.

office of the presidency.<sup>196</sup>

## Arts and Leisure

Art according to Salafi preachers is a method, or *wasīla*, of expression and therefore is itself considered to be generally allowed or *Mubāḥ*. It is the works of individuals, however, that then make art acceptable or not in Islamic terms. Acceptable art is that which is purely religious in nature, and deals exclusively with the glorification of God or acts of worship. To some, even preaching to groups is considered an art form, with a number of television shows dedicated to describing the qualities and requisites of a good preacher,<sup>197</sup> as well as exhibitions of children as young as seven years old loudly presenting traditional speeches.<sup>198</sup>

Beyond the realm of religion, however, art and acts of leisure become almost exclusively forbidden. This typically falls under a much wider discussion of *Lahw*, or having fun, which is not allowed. Anything that detracts from acts of worship such as delaying prayers or wastes time is in general forbidden. Specifically this can include activities as simple as watching movies and television shows.<sup>199</sup>

The most vivid example of the prohibition of *Lahw* was the Salafi response to the massacre of more than 70 Egyptians who died in the violence between the supporters of two soccer teams after a match in the city of Port Said.<sup>200</sup> While the rest of society called them “martyrs of the Revolution” and victims of violence perpetrated by former members of the Mubarak regime, preachers ‘Abd al-Mun’im al-Shaḥḥāt,<sup>201</sup> Muḥammad Ḥussein

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196 “Al Murtaziq Selim al 'Awwa al Kadhāb,” YouTube video, 9:21, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by “antimajouss.” 7 Jul 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqJsues8jaA>.

197 “Fann al Da'wa, Episode 1,” YouTube video, 10:58, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “kasthaleeb.” 4 Nov 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0U8-J5RcRAA>.

198 “‘Udhamā’ Ṣughār,” YouTube video, 8:27, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “Ḥassān1589.” 29 Mar 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMFXbIYzuVA>.

199 “Ḥukm Mushāhidat al Aflām wa al Musalsalāt lil Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān,” YouTube video, 2:44, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “kasthaleeb.” 4 Sep 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjvVD2w3vM4>.

200 “Egypt Says Goodbye to the Martyrs of the Massacre at Port Sa’īd.” Al Shorouk, 3 Feb 2012, page 3.

201 Aḥmad Hassaw, “Ḍaḥāyā Būr Sa’īd: Shuhadā’ am Qutlā Lahw Muḥarram,” Deutsche Welle, 7 Feb 2012,

Ya'qūb,<sup>202</sup> and Muḥammad 'Abd al-Maḡṣūd<sup>203</sup> claimed that they had died in vain watching a forbidden sport, and that by overwhelmingly supporting football teams they were actually practicing a form of hidden *shirk*, loving football in the place of God. Some Salafi preachers such as Aḥmad al Naqīb<sup>204</sup> and Wagdy Ghuneim<sup>205</sup> were astonished by these remarks, and condemned the other preachers for causing tribulation and instability in the society.

Beyond *Lahw*, individual acts of art and leisure are specifically forbidden because they show-off or spread immoral practices, particularly those related to women such as sexual relationships, the appearance of a woman not wearing a full veil, or simply the presence of men and women in one location at the same time.<sup>206</sup> Clear examples of this can be found in the Salafi position on literature. Some of the country's most popular modern authors have come under direct attack by Salafi preachers, particularly those who were popular for their depictions of life in the city's poorest areas or described scenes of sexual intimacy. Classical writers Naguib Maḥfūz, Anīs Maṣṣūr, Ṭaha Ḥussein, and modern novelist Alā' al Aswānī for example have all been objects of serious condemnation by preachers such as 'Abd al-Mun'eim al Shaḥḥat,<sup>207</sup> Yāssir Burhāmī,<sup>208</sup>

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accessed 22 Mar 2012, <http://www.dw.de/dw/article/0,,15725184,00.html>.

202 "Faḍfaḍa al Sheikh Muḥammad Hussein Ya'qūb Ḥawl Aḥdāth Būr Sa'īd," YouTube video, 1:04:11, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by "badboys33333335." 5 Feb 2012, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEzAotsbsH8\\_](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEzAotsbsH8_).

203 "Kalima Ḥawl Aḥdāth Būr Sa'īd al Dāmiyya Muḥammad 'Abd al-Maḡṣūd Tarīq al Islām," YouTube video, 13:40, from Tariq al Islam video library, posted by "ahḤassān7777." 3 Feb 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eq3-s9xLx0Y&feature=related>.

204 "Aḥdāth Būr Sa'īd wa al Manhaj al Salafī al Sheikh Aḥmad al Naqīb," YouTube video, 12:01, private lecture, posted by "samm8686." 5 Feb 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzOtZDwREP0>.

205 "Ta'līq al Ustādh Wajdy Ghoneim 'alā Aḥdāth Būr Sa'īd," YouTube video, 14:39, private audio recording, posted by "islamicworld10000." 2 Feb 2012, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0szzQSSNtOk\\_](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0szzQSSNtOk_).

206 It is for these reasons that Muṣṭafa al 'Adawī forbade visiting most summer vacation spots in the country. See "Ḥukm al Dhahāb ilā al Maṣyaf," YouTube video, 1:07, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by "NourElIslam91." 20 Mar 2012, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ka42U5nPdds\\_](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ka42U5nPdds_).

207 "Liḡā' Al Sheikh 'Abd al-Mun'eim al Shaḥḥat ma' Mu'ataz al Dimardāsh," YouTube video, 44:38, from an episode of Miṣr al Jadida on Al Hayat satellite channel broadcast 11 Dec 2011, posted by "aboanas1980." 12 Jan 2012, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8CPN\\_oVDZQ&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8CPN_oVDZQ&feature=related).

208 "Riwāyat Wilād Ḥāritna wa Liyyh Nobel? Najīb Maḥfouz wa al Sheikh Yāssir Burahāmī," YouTube video, 4:22, from Ana Salafy website, posted by "sohaibalromy22." 8 Dec 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FgYtyNypvno>.

Abu Ishāq al Huwainī,<sup>209</sup> Muḥammad Isma'īl al Muqaddim,<sup>210</sup> and others.

However, there has been very little discussion within the Salafi movement as to what extent these opinions on the arts would affect domestic policy. What would be the legal consequences if an artist were to create a work of art considered forbidden by Salafi preachers? Are they simply to be condemned and Muslims called to reject it? Or should these works of art be banned in an act to protect society?

Beyond the legal opinions, there are Salafi preachers who have taken matters into their own hands, using the country's legal system to seek the banning of material deemed as inappropriate or calling for the imprisonment of anyone who defies their religious interpretation. This has led to lawsuits against the production of classic works of literature such as the *Thousand and One Nights*.<sup>211</sup> Adel Imam, one of the country's oldest actors, was sentenced to three months with hard work for insulting Islam's reported “official dress of the white robes and the face veil”,<sup>212</sup> and even youth pop singer Tamer Hosny has seen the wrath of this legal movement, sued in court because he sang a song that could have negative religious interpretations.<sup>213</sup>

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209 “Majmū'a al Mukharribīn Anis Manṣūr wa Najīb Maḥfūz al Sheikh al Ḥuwainī,” YouTube video, 10:10, from a mosque lesson, posted by “AL7OWAYNE.” 21 Jul 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljv8EIVP6Yo>.

210 Muḥammad Isma'īl al Muqaddim, *'Awdat al Hijāb* (Alexandria, Egypt: Dar al 'Aqeeda, 2002) 1, 144-146.

211 Wajdi Al Kūmī, “Jābir 'Asfūr: Al Muṭālibūn bi Man' Alf Layla Jahala bil Turāth,” *Al Yawm al Sab'a*, 4 May 2010.

212 Shaymā' al Qaranshawī, “Ḥabs al Fannān Adel Imām 3 Ashhour ma' al Shughl bi Tuhmat Izdirā' al Adīyyān,” *Al Masry Al Yawm*, 1 February 2012.

213 Suhaib Yassin, “Iḥālat Tāmer Ḥosnī ilā al Niyāba bi Tuhmat Sabb al Dhāt al Ilāhiyya,” *Masrawy*, 18 March 2012, accessed 25 Mar 2012, <http://www.masrawy.com/news/egypt/politics/2012/march/18/4880882.aspx>.

## CHAPTER 4:

### Methodology

After understanding the historical development of the Salafi movement as well as viewing a selection of the opinions of the members of the movement, the following section seeks to derive the methodology of the Salafi movement and give a limited view on how they see the world around them.

### Ideological Influences

Many of the members of the Salafi movement through their biographies have shown to be influenced by a number of Egyptian and foreign thinkers and traditional writers. In the field of *Fiqh* or Jurisprudence, the work of Muslim Brotherhood member Sayyid Sābiq, *Fiqh al Sunna*, is widely mentioned in their biographies, with a number of Salafi writers completing explanatory works of Sābiq.<sup>214</sup> This work produced by a non-Salafi has nevertheless been mentioned by Salafi commentators as one of the primary texts explaining Islamic law, yet was designed specifically for individuals, using the simplest language possible.

Another major figure mentioned in the works of the Salafi writers is ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Kishk (1933 - 1996). A prominent religious scholar who was known for his large number of speeches and his populist, anti-government stances, Kishk figured prominently in the early lives of the Salafi scholars and Egyptian society as a whole. In the words of Gilles Kepel:

“In the last years of Sadat's presidency, it was impossible to walk the streets of Cairo without hearing his stentorian voice. Climb into a collective service-taxi and the driver is listening to one of Sheikh Kishk's recorded sermons on his cassette player. Stop for a fruit juice at a street-corner stand, and while the palate savors mango or cane sugar, the ear is bombarded by the sermon delivered by Sheikh Kishk the previous Friday...”<sup>215</sup>

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214 Abu Bakr al Ḥanbalī, *Mukhtaṣar Fiqh al Sunna* (Cairo: Dār al Khulafā' al Rāshidīn, 2011).

215 Kepel, 172.

In the field of Hadith, the works of Muḥammad Nāṣir Al Dīn Al Albānī provide the boldest attraction and are cited the most throughout Salafī works and speeches. Al Albānī was born in 1914 in the village of Shkoder, currently in modern Albania. Due to political difficulties of the time, his father moved the family to Damascus. In his early life, Al Albānī took a keen interest in Hadith, and during his life wrote a number of works on the subject. He spent the majority of his later life in Jordan, with a brief appointment at the Islamic University of Medina in Saudi Arabia between 1961-63<sup>216</sup> as well as a number of short visits to other countries in the region including Egypt, however only to conduct research at the Library of Alexandria.<sup>217</sup> He passed away in 1999.

The importance of Al Albānī and his contribution to the Salafī understanding of Hadith cannot be understated in the least. Almost all of the Salafī written works relate their Hadiths to the catalogs of Al Albānī, with some such as Maḥmūd al Miṣrī relying exclusively on his rulings according to the soundness of a particular Hadith as well as its use in law.<sup>218</sup> For example, the most important speaker who discusses the position of Hadith is Abu Ishāq El Ḥuwainī. Described by his students as a renowned scholar of the Hadith sciences, one of his largest independent works is an anthology of praise for Al Albānī, defending him against critics in the fields of Hadith, Usūl, and Jurisprudence. He states in the introduction that he believes that Albānī is a living example of the Prophetic Sunna, and if this symbol is attacked, or even questioned, it is as though that person has attacked the Sunna itself.<sup>219</sup> Others, such as Muḥammad Ḥassān, have expressed similar opinions in the praise of Albānī's position on Hadith.<sup>220</sup>

And finally, almost all Salafī preachers in Egypt were significantly influenced by

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216 Muḥammad Ibrahim al Shaybānī, *Ḥayāt al Albānī, wa Atharuhu wa Thinā' al 'Ulamā' 'Alayhi* (Cairo: Maktabat al Sadawi, 1987); Essam Mūsā Hādī, *Ḥayāt al 'Allāma al Albānī Raḥimahu Allāh Ta'ālā bi Qalamihi* (Amman, Jordan: Al Maktaba al Islamiyya, 2011).

217 Abu Ishāq al Ḥuwainī al Atharī, *Tanbīh al Hājid ilā ma Waqa' min al Nadhr fī Kutub al Amājid* (Dubai: Maktabat al Balagh, 1998) 14.

218 Maḥmūd al Miṣrī, *Yawm fī al Janna* (Cairo: Maktabat al Safa, 2011).

219 Al Athari, *Tanbīh al Hājid*, 22-23.

220 “Al Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān Yūdāfī 'an al Imām al Albānī Raḥimahu Allāh,” YouTube video, 6:43, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “AbuTaymiyah.” 3 Jul 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0GXaMNC9LKM>.



‘Abd al-'Azīz bin Bāz (1910 - 1999) and Muḥammad ibn Ṣalāḥ ibn 'Uthaymayn (1925 - 2001), two of Saudi Arabia's largest modern religious figures, with many Salafi preachers taking the effort to list at least one of the two on their resumes, even if they had only attended one lesson and were not regular students. The relationship of Egyptian Salafis to these Saudi figures is not only one of a teacher influencing the thoughts of his students, but has developed to the point where legal issues expressed by Salafi preachers are simply direct applications of the Saudi opinion.

### **Sources Used in Discussion**

Upon approaching most works written by members of the Salafi movement, the average reader typically finds that the order of presentation is set as the following: first are the Qur’ānic verses relevant to the subject. Second a presentation of the necessary Hadiths, usually with the validating rulings provided by Al Albānī. Thirdly are statements of Sheikh al Islam Ibn Taymiyya or Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyya. Fourth are fatwas from Saudi scholars such as ‘Abd al-'Azīz bin Bāz or Muḥammad Ibn Ṣālīḥ ibn 'Uthaymayn. Fifth are any other opinions are provided that support their opinion, and then finally they will present their own interpretation.

This style of presentation can be found in the works of Maḥmūd al Miṣrī, a prolific writer with more than a hundred works. In his book *Yawm fī al Janna*, for example, he raises the question of the children of unbelievers and what their place will be in the afterlife. As this issue is not discussed in the Qur’ān he skips the first step and presents two Ḥadiths confirming that all children are born without sin and it is their parents that introduce them to other religions. To confirm these Hadiths, he directly quotes al-Bukhārī and Ibn Ḥajar’s analysis of these opinions and introduces a third Ḥadith in neither collection but declared sound by Al Albānī. Step three is then stating that this is the majority opinion, citing a *fatwa* of Ibn Taymiyya. Step four is left out and step five is placed by citing that this is also the opinion of al Qurṭūbī, without presenting

the quotation.<sup>221</sup>

This example of presentation shows the step-by-step process used in presenting opinions, and that at times these steps can be skipped. Ultimately, each step in this process is done without an analysis of the texts cited and usually consists of direct quotes, leaving them as they are without interpretation.

### **Method of Presentation**

To show an example of how Salafī members present in a modern argument, Abu Ishāq al Ḥuwainī presented the ruling of cursing the Prophet on the Hikma satellite channel, in response to cartoons presented by businessman Najib Sawiris that showed Micky and Minnie Mouse with a long beard and *niqāb*. After a long line of personal attacks and insults and a statement that religious people never stand down from their strong moral principles, he states that cursing the Prophet removes one from the religion and is a crime punishable by death, even if the person apologizes. This is opposed to cursing God, because this curse does not hurt the Creator. A human being however, which the Prophet is, is hurt by these negative statements. The Prophet Muḥammad has the right to forgive those who cursed him, however this right ended upon his death. The burden then falls on the entire Muslim community and its ruler to carry out the right of the Prophet to retaliation. To back his argument, Al Ḥuwainī uses a story related by Abu Barza in the Hadith Collection of *Musnad Aḥmad*, leaving out any discussion of the validity of these statements and skipping through most of the Hadith.

Once he has established this basic principle upon which he leaves no room for argument, Al Ḥuwainī then begins to widen the circle of this ruling beyond its traditional context. He states that in a Hadith of Bukhārī narrated by Sayyid ibn Yazīd that the Caliph ‘Umar threatened to kill people who raised their voices in the Prophet’s mosque in Medina, claiming that this was an application of the Qur’ānic verse that forbids raising the voices of the believers over the Prophet. Something this simple, he states, is

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221 Maḥmūd al Miṣrī, *Yawm fī al-Janna* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Ṣafā, 2011) 362 - 364.

something that all Muslims should defend. Because beards and the *niqāb* are critical symbols of the Prophet's Tradition, any person who attacks them or those who wear them is directly attacking the Prophet. These statements effectively remove all criticism of the Salafi movement in general, as they are simply working to apply the traditions of the Prophet.<sup>222</sup>

Throughout the speech, he uses authoritative statements such as “every single scholar throughout Islamic history agrees on this issue, and no individual has ever questioned this,” as well as rhetorical questions including “Who would ever agree to this? This is a question that I have proposed and will answer: nobody.” Each of these statements is designed to limit the legitimacy of alternative opinions.

In another situation al Ḥuwainī gave a speech comparing the Muslim World to the United States, asking why is it that the Muslims have been unable to invade the US to this date. He claimed that it was not because of American strength, rather due to the extreme weakness of Muslims. The United States is home to a fake culture that commonly allows marriages between men and donkeys and goats, lets homosexuals run freely, and arrests any man who dares to hit his son as it is a violation of his personal rights. According to Al Ḥuwainī, Muslim weakness comes from the fact that one-third of the world Muslim population does not pray, gives charity, nor “promotes virtue and prevents vice.”<sup>223</sup>

As a result, while the accuracy of these references are and how they relevant they are to the opinions of the overall Salafi movement is questionable, it is clear that preachers are integrating them into their speeches for the explicit purpose of enhancing legitimacy. Salafis know that most of their audience will not take the effort to confirm or deny the details of their speeches, and that their information and awareness of most

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222 “Al Dalīl wa al Burhān al Wajh al Ḥaqīqī lil Islām al Sheikh Abi Ishāq al Ḥuwainī,” YouTube video, 13:02, from Al Hikma satellite channel, posted by “ATTENTIONNN.” 12 Oct 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leWky9CvO7g>.

223 “Amrīkā allati Ra'ayt,” Mawqī' Faḍīlat al Sheikh Abi Ishāq al Ḥuwainī, 9 Mar 2009, accessed 11 Apr 2012, <http://www.alheweny.org/aws/play.php?catsmktba=862>.

foreign subjects is limited. Therefore, they maintain a simple approach, working to stifle opinion and render their interpretation as the only legitimate representation of Islam.

Their style is also always that of a preacher and not a participant of an academic discussion. Discussions by Salafis are almost always referred to quite literally as *Khutbas*, or sermons, with the first few minutes of even simple television interviews beginning with the citation of Qur'ānic verses, Hadiths, and other messages typically only heard from the pulpit and not in secular debates.

### **Theology as the Core**

*Bid'a*, as discussed by all of these writers and the proponents of modern Salafism, is also primarily an issue of belief and theology, known in Arabic as *'aqeeda*. Legal issues, or *fiqh*, come secondary in most Salafī discussions. The explanation for this is that Salafis believe that the main reason for the collapse of the Muslim community is the introduction of *bid'a*. These innovations act as forms of corruption, rendering all actions of the Muslims invalid, resulting in a declining state of worldly affairs. This results in the focus of Salafis on issues that are of merely spiritual influence to Egyptian society, such as visiting Sufi saints at graves<sup>224</sup> and dress codes, dramatically enhanced through their style of communication to become some of the most important issues facing the country.

At other times, the issues discussed by the Salafī movement are non-existent or far from applicable to modern Egyptian society. For example, in a work written by preacher Mahmoud al Masrī calling to attention the wrongs committed by Muslims every day during their prayers, amongst relevant issues such as yelling and begging in mosques, the author calls attention to planting trees in the mosque, men praying wearing gold jewelry, praying in the bathroom and the nesting places of camels.<sup>225</sup>

Additionally, there is a tendency in the Salafī movement to turn legal rulings into

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224 Muḥammad Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī, *Tahdhīr al Sājid min Ittikhādh al Qubūr Masājīd* (Riyad: Maktabat al Ma'ārif, 2001).

225 Maḥmūd al Miṣrī, *Irshād al Sālikīn ilā Akhtā' al Muṣallīn* (Cairo: Dar al Salaf al Ṣāliḥ, 2006) 10-30.

a choice between belief and disbelief. For example, Salafis strongly promote the shortening of pants and lengthening the beard for men and the wearing of the full-face veil for women. Many preachers defend these legal positions strongly, and when confronted with an alternative interpretation they refuse to accept it. Rather, they claim that shortening one's pants is a sign of faith, a symbol of the pure religion of Islam as it was presented to mankind by God and the Prophet Muḥammad. This was the stance taken by Abu Ishāq al Ḥuwainī against the Mufti of Egypt 'Ali Juma', whose comments resulted in a lawsuit.<sup>226</sup>

It should also be noted that the legal issues chosen by Salafis also directly relate to popular stances at the time. For example, while presidential candidate Hāzim Ṣalāḥ Abu Isma'īl in his program offered to ban foreign tourists from wearing bikinis on the country's beaches because it was detrimental to the nation's morals, he failed to address issues such as smoking, an issue that affects more than 26% of the country's male population.<sup>227</sup> Scholars from across the religious spectrum have issued rulings forbidding smoking, however it seems Abu Isma'īl is unwilling to approach the issue due to the direct impact that it would have on his own popularity and election chances.

The same can be said for *bid'a* and that the innovations that need to be cleansed are chosen specifically to avoid any direct conflict with the existent political, economic, or at times even cultural regime. Preachers, particularly before the Revolution, rarely pushed for the removal of the *bid'a* of the political or legal system, presumably because of their fear of imprisonment by state security. In issues that deal with culture such as the lawsuits against Tamer Hosnī and Adel Imām were also all raised after these figures had fallen from their peaks in popularity and could easily be attacked without causing much public uproar.

### **Approaching the Qur'ān and Sunna: Selective Literalism**

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226 "Radd al Sheikh al Ḥuwainī 'alá al Mufti..." YouTube video, 16:21, from Al Hikma satellite channel, posted by "alhekmahchanneltv." 7 Jul 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpjrCeDdwGU>.

227 *Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic*, World Health Organization, 2011.

The Qur'ān is to the Salafis, as it is to all other Muslims, the literal unchanged word of God, handed down to the Prophet Muḥammad by the Angel Gabriel, and represents the foundational text for all followers of the religion. Throughout the centuries Muslims have practiced Quranic exegesis through a process known in Arabic as *ta'wīl*, deriving alternative meanings or comparing verses with one another to develop different rulings. Salafis, however, will completely reject this process as invalid, claiming that the only understanding of the verses is to comprehend the surface, linguistic interpretation. Any deviation from this form of interpretation constitutes an introduction of *bid'a*.

A famous example of this method of interpretation in Salafī theology is that of the “hand” of God. In the Qur'ān a reference is made to God's hand.<sup>228</sup> Traditional scholars interpreted this word as figurative, more of a reference to the omnipotent and ever-present ability of God. Salafis, however, completely reject this statement and argue that this refers to the actual, literal hand of God. They respond to attacks that this is in violation of fundamental practice, that God is indescribable and beyond human comprehension, by stating that the hand exists, but its characteristics remain unknown.<sup>229</sup>

A legal application of this approach to the rejection of interpretation of Qur'ānic verses is that of the position of women in society. As was discussed in Chapter 3, all Salafi opinions viewed for the purposes of this study cited that women are required to stay in their homes and that they should only leave in the case of necessity. This opinion is typically justified according to Salafis by a clear Qur'ānic verse.<sup>230</sup> This thereby negates women from participating in issues of politics and taking public office, as it

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228 Qur'ān 48:10: “Verily those who plight their fealty to thee do no less than plight their fealty to God. The Hand of God is over their hands; then any one who violates his oath, does so to the harm of his own soul, and any one who fulfills what he has covenanted with God, God will soon grant him a great Reward.” Translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَمَنْ نَكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ فَمَن يُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا}

229 “Al Raḥmān 'alā al 'Arsh Istawá,” YouTube video, 9:32, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “mohajery.” 6 Nov 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EwjiIJUiFFk&feature=related>.

230 Qur'ān 33: “And stay quietly in your houses, and make not a dazzling display, like that of the former Times of Ignorance....” Translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

{وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى}

would require them to leave the home and be visible to the public, which to Salafis is interpreted as a direct example of *tabarruj* in the cited verse. For example, in the mixed public gatherings in Tahrir Square in celebration of the one year anniversary of the January 25<sup>th</sup> 2011 Revolution, Salafi preacher Ayman Şaydaḥ remarked during live coverage of the events that what he saw angered him, and that “women should only leave the house and participate in protests only when there are no more men.”<sup>231</sup>

Although there is a general call to reject *ta'wīl*, there are a number of situations in which Salafis contradict their methodology and accept opinions based upon the interpretation of source texts. In the area of criminal punishments, for example, there is the traditional punishment of death for the crime of *Ridda*, translated as apostasy or the conversion of a Muslim to a religion other than Islam. Modern thinkers such as ‘Ali Juma’<sup>232</sup> as well as Islamist presidential candidate ‘Abd al-Mun’eim Abu al Futūḥ<sup>233</sup> have stated that this ruling is baseless, and that there are two clear Qur’ānic verses that override this ruling,<sup>234</sup> stating that there is no compulsion in religion and that those who wish to believe or disbelieve have that right. This ruling according to Juma’ and Abu al Futūḥ was only devised by jurists in response to pressing political circumstances, and was almost never applied during the time of the *Salaf*. In the modern state situation, this would be equivalent to the crime of high treason, and not a violation of religious belief.

However, in the view of Salafī preachers such as Abu Ishāq al Ḥuwainī,<sup>235</sup>

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231 “Special Coverage of the Anniversary of the Egyptian Revolution,” Al Rahma Staellite Chanel, broadcast 25 Jan 2012.

232 ‘Ali Juma’ “Al Rissāla,” Attachment to Al Medina Newspaper, 27 Jul 2007.

233 “‘Abd al-Mun’eim Abū al Futūḥ Yalghī Hadd al Ridda,” YouTube video, 3:21, from an episode of 10pm on Dream satellite channel, posted by “muhammedsaeed12.” 14 Mar 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jM-GskHBbaQ>.

234 Qur’ān 2:256, “Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error...” Translated by ‘Abdullah Yusuf ‘Ali and

“لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ”

Qur’ān 18:29, “Say the Truth is from your Lord: Let him who will believe and let him who will reject (it)...” Translation by ‘Abdullah Yusuf ‘Ali

“وَقُلْ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ”

235 “Hadd al Ridda,” YouTube video, 4:02, from mosque lecture, posted by “muslimscoptics.” 11 May 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvIgAOnLvYI>.

Muḥammad Ḥassān,<sup>236</sup> and Aḥmad al Naqīb,<sup>237</sup> the punishment for apostasy is a fundamental punishment given to Muslims by God Himself and that these thinkers are ignoring a clearly determined ruling in Islam. Ḥuwainī argues that whoever is explaining these verses in the way of Juma' or Abu Futūḥ is someone who smokes drugs (*ḥashīsh*) and the verses that reject compulsion and encourage the freedom of religious thought are subject to extensive interpretation, actually referring to the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims. People have the full right to move between other religions as they are all false. However, once they have made the decision to enter Islam, this ruling is then changed and compulsion is allowed in the form of forced prayer, dress, etc. and that those who leave the religion should be hunted down and killed for disobeying God. Ḥassān attempts to present Abu Al Futūḥ's take as well, that all Muslims are part of one "nation" and by leaving that nation they have committed high treason. Al Naqīb, on the other hand, bypasses the Qur'ānic verses and moves directly to a Ḥadīth from Muslim stating that all those who leave the religion should be killed, and that Abu Bakr fought lots of "very large wars" against those who had left the religion.

The second source of legislation, in agreement with all other Muslims, is the Hadith or Sunna, meaning more specifically the sayings, actions, and decisions made by the Prophet Muḥammad. However, Salafis will elevate the status of the Hadith in accordance with their primary influence in this field, Muḥammad Nāṣir al Dīn Al Albānī. They will consider Hadith at times to be more important than the Qur'ān, particularly in the understanding of their law. Their argument for this status of the Hadith is the fact that the Qur'ān was brought by the Prophet Muḥammad, and that it is only through his interpretation and practical application that the concepts of the Qur'ān can be understood, particularly the way that the law or *shari'a* should be applied.

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236 "Qatl al Murtadd Muḥammad Ḥassān," YouTube video, 3:04, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by "zzzzilzalzzz." 24 Mar 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryXG9Mt4usI&feature=related>.

237 "D. Aḥmad al Naqīb Yarudd 'alā man Ankara Ḥadd al Ridda," YouTube video, 2:18, from Al Basīra website, posted by "ahmedabuganna." 31 May 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIUqnZriMMs>.



In classical Hadith studies, a particular statement attached to the Prophet could be assigned a wide spectrum of different rulings based upon its correctness. For example, a relatively strong Hadith could be stated as Good (*Ḥasan*) or Sound (*Ṣaḥīḥ*). Muslim legal scholars frequently based opinions on weak Hadiths, citing the nuances and relationships the text of the Hadiths had with the law. Salafis, on the other hand, simplify this approach. Although specific works in the field such as those of al Albānī will mention these different classifications, from a legal perspective Hadiths are treated as either sound or weak.

Legally, once a Hadith has been determined as sound, it immediately becomes a requirement upon the entire Muslim population to apply and any individual who, of his own free will, decides to ignore the application of this Hadith opens himself to questions of faith. This determination of soundness is typically by the chain of narrators (*Isnād*) with little criticism of the content (*Matn*). In certain circumstances, this concept can also been applied in reverse. For example, in a collection of al Albānī's rulings, he rejects the validity of the Hadith "If you see Mu'āwiya on my podium then kill him" not based upon its chain of narrators, but rather because it was not applied by the person who heard it nor the Muslim population at the time.<sup>238</sup>

Alternatively, Salafis will also strongly reject the use of weak Hadiths, or those that contain issues of question amongst scholars in the reliability of their narrators. One of the primary Salafī arguments is that the spread of incorrect practices and *bid'a* comes from the loose acceptance of weak Hadiths, for what they will argue were personal reasons (*hawā*) or to promote a particular group of Muslims throughout history. This strong rejection of weak Hadith will lead to one of the highest levels of debate between the Salafī movement and other members of the Egyptian Muslim community. In a number of printed Salafī works, the positions of scholars from Azhar are attacked because

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238 Hādi ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Umar, *Al Fawā'id al Majmū'a min Aḥādīth al Ṣaḥīḥa wa al Ḍa'ifa wa al Mawḍū'a* (Cairo: Dār al Rawḍa, 2008) 3, 42.

they use weak Hadiths.<sup>239</sup>

Salafis add an additional requirement that in order for a particular Hadith to be valid for use it must be considered to be sound, or “*Ṣaḥīḥ*,” particularly in terms of its chain of narrators or *isnād*. Once this chain has been determined to be sound, however, the contents or *matn* of the Hadith are immediately accepted as valid. Logically, the Salafis argue, if the chain of narrators is correct, then how could the contents of the Hadith have any level of doubt?

It is also important to note the Salafi lack of a framework when approaching both the Qur'ān and Sunna such as that established by scholars of *Usūl al Fiqh*. The literal statements of these texts are considered universal in and of themselves, and not simply the general values and principles that they promote. An example of this aspect of the Salafi methodology appeared in an argument presented by Muḥammad al Ghazālī. Salafi preachers once took the Hadith confirmed by Al Albānī: "Take the milk of the cow, for it is healing, and the fat of it is a cure, and the meat of it is diseased"<sup>240</sup> literally, openly preaching to their followers that the eating of beef is forbidden. Al Ghazālī attacked this position, stating that there are numerous occasions in the Qur'ān, throughout the Prophet's life, and in traditional Islamic law where this type of meat was completely allowed. The Salafis, in the argument of al Ghazālī, were ignoring the context of the Hadith, taking one statement of the Prophet as the primary basis for a religious ruling without understanding any surrounding circumstances.

In another example, Salafi preachers tend to agree that photography in general is considered forbidden, however there are certain circumstances in which it is allowed, particularly live television broadcasts. Their evidence for this is a number of Prophetic

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239 Ṭalḥa Muḥammad al Musayir, *Al Duktūr 'Alī Juma'...Ilā Ayn?* (Cairo: Al 'Alam Printing, 2011) 48 – 53.

240 Muḥammad Naṣr al Dīn al Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al Jāmi'a al Saghīr wa Ziyādatuhu* (Beirut: Al Maktab al Islāmī, 1988) 750, Hadith 4061.

"عليكم بالبان البقر، فإنها شفاء، وسمنها دواء، ولحمها داء"

statements rejecting the practice<sup>241</sup>. However, the word for photographers in Arabic, *al Muṣawwirūn*, when understood in its linguistic context, means simply “image makers,” and refers to those who build idols, creating an image of God. Some Salafis ignore this linguistic context, and use it as the basis for their attacks on not only photography but also a number of fine arts including sculpture. Only those who have reached their fame through appearances on television such as Muḥammad Ḥassān have declared that the ruling is different.<sup>242</sup>

### **The Nature of Shari'a**

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, the primary focus of the Salafi movement in Egypt is on issues of theology and rituals, but legal concerns are secondary. Nonetheless, the members of the movement have expressed their opinions regarding the position of Sharia, although in an extremely abstract and absolute manner. Islamic law or *shari'a* represents to the Salafis the pure Law of God that has remained entirely unchanged since its original presentation to the Prophet Muḥammad. New issues that have appeared in the world simply require a deeper understanding of the source texts, which will reveal the new ruling.

The only way that any society can reach its full potential is through the application of *shari'a* and, particularly in the case of Egypt, there will continue to be failures in the administration of the state until *shari'a* is fully applied. It is the ultimate representation of justice and that once it is applied all criminals will immediately be easily dealt with. There are no attorneys or representatives in the Salafi presentation of Shari'a, as the job of an attorney is seen as doubtful because he typically represents those who are unjust and is driven to seek out rights, which he and his client are not allowed.<sup>243</sup>

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241 Al Bukhārī, Vol 7, P 167, Book al Libās, Chapter 'Adhāb al Muṣawwirīn Yawm al Qiyāma, and Muslim Vol 3, P 1670, Hadith 98, Book al Libas wa al Zīna, Chapter Taḥrīm Taṣwīr Sūrat al Ḥaywān

242 “Ḥukm al Taṣwīr fī al Islām lil Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān,” YouTube video, 7:09, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “m3nani.” 30 May 2010, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_w4TT4VP1Gk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_w4TT4VP1Gk).

243 “Ḥukm al Muḥamā fī al Islam – al Sheikh 'Abd al-'Azīz bin Bāz,” YouTube video, 3:31, from recording, posted by “heya0hay.” 21 Mar 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x\\_ReJW0f\\_c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_ReJW0f_c).

The application of Islamic law according to the Salafi movement is based on three general steps. The first is the system of enforcement, which is that a criminal is brought forth by the people or representatives of the law, known as the *muhtasib* or the *Hay'at al Amr bil Ma'rūf wa al Nahy 'an al Munkar*. In most circumstances, it appears that they believe that most individuals who appear in front of the court have been caught in the midst of a criminal act, and there is little need to prove guilt.

The second step is the bringing of evidence, known in Arabic as the *Iqāmat al Hujaj*, a simple process of registration and presentation of the condemning evidence, which cannot be argued against or denied. This evidence is usually mentioned as being more than enough to proceed with the sentencing and consists of two things: witnesses or a confession.<sup>244</sup> Interestingly enough one of the main scholars drawn upon by the Salafi movement, Ibn Al Qayyim, lists in detail a number of additional ways to prove a crime,<sup>245</sup> something completely ignored by Salafis in their discussions on the application of Shari'a.

All legal systems created by humans, or what is referred to as *wad'i* are seen as entirely corrupt, and no matter how advanced it may become or how just it may appear to be, it will remain inferior to the justice of God's law. These laws are repressive, and are seen as an example of worshipping another God and all Muslims should violently reject these laws. Simply one application of the Islamic law would be more than enough to immediately remove all crimes of, for example, stealing.<sup>246</sup>

As a result of this view of the *shari'a*, the application of this utopian vision of the law is seen as a political goal of the Salafi movement in Egypt in the post-2011 period,

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244 Yāssir Burhāmī, *Al Amr bil Ma'rūf* (Alexandria: Dar al 'Aqeeda, 2006).

245 Baber Johansen, "Signs As Evidence: The Doctrine of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyya on Proof," in *Islamic Law and Society*, 9, 2, 2002, 168-193.

246 "Al Qawānīn al Wad'iyya Ṭaghūt Yu'bad min Dūn Allāh – Al Ḥuwainī," YouTube video, 2:48, from Friday sermon, posted by "ALIslamDeeny." 29 Sep 2011, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_9Qr6UmImp8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9Qr6UmImp8).

and remains a part of the program of Salafi political organizations and societal organizations.<sup>247</sup>

### **Relationship with Society**

Salafis see Muslims and particularly the cause of Islam in a place of permanent weakness and war against its three greatest enemies: the Jews, the Christians, and the liberals. They must always be on the defensive and prepared for an impending conflict with these groups to reject their oppression and the introduction of their ideas into Islamic thought.<sup>248</sup> Examples of this can be seen in the often-violent relationship taken with minority Christians in Egypt as discussed in Chapter 3.

Because many of the issues discussed by Salafis are drawn directly from theological debates, many times the conflict is framed as one between faith and disbelief, leading many Salafis to see themselves as the only true Muslims. For example, parliament member Mamdouh Isma'il, a representative from the *Jamā' Islāmiyya* which has significant Salafi roots, decided to stand in the middle of a session and announce the call to prayer in protest of the speaker Sa'd al Katātnī, a high-ranking member of the Muslim Brotherhood, refusing to stop the session for prayer. He was censured by the speaker who commented "you are no more religious than anyone else here."<sup>249</sup>

### **Limitations of Opinion**

Salafi preachers often point to their acceptance of multiple opinions and interpretations of the religious texts, citing the differences that appeared between the Companions of the Prophet Muḥammad as proof that the religion of Islam is wide enough to accommodate a range of views, making it applicable for all eras and places.

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247 "Al Barnāmiḡ al Siyāsi," Hizb al Nour, accessed 18 Feb 2012, [http://www.alnourparty.org/page/program\\_poilitcal](http://www.alnourparty.org/page/program_poilitcal).

248 Ali Juma', *Al Mutashaddidūn* (Cairo: Dar al Muqattam, 2011) 10 – 12.

249 Reḡā al Qādī, "Adhān Isma'il Yughriḡ al Sha'b fi Fawḡā, wa al Kātātṇī Yarudd: Lasta Akthar minna Islāman," Al Masry al Yawm, 7 Feb 2012.

However, there is one major condition to this acceptance of other opinions: in any case where two opinions existed between the *Salaf* or other Muslim scholars, no modern scholar can offer a third opinion outside this original context. This point was clearly articulated by Salafī preachers in their response to the *niqāb* debate as presented in Chapter 3. Salafis argued Muslim scholars throughout history placed the face veil into two categories: required (*wājib*) or preferred (*mustaḥabb*). Therefore, any opinion presented by a modern scholar such as Al Ṭanṭāwī, ‘Ali Juma’, or others calling it allowed (*mubāḥ*), hated (*makrūh*), or forbidden (*ḥarām*) is not allowed, and that they can only choose one of the two presented by earlier scholars.<sup>250</sup> This point impairs the debate between Salafis and their opponents, restricting them to a particular historical context and forbidding the introduction of present circumstances.

### **Malleability**

A central aspect of the Salafī methodology and what tends to create the most confusion is that the speakers of this movement are malleable, willing to completely abandon a strict attachment to the texts of the Qur’ān and Sunna in support of an alternative opinion.

In the field of media, Salafis have radically changed their opinions over time, mainly to reflect changing methods of communication and to allow their movement to grow. Al Albānī has an entire book on the subject, entirely banning television, video recordings, live broadcasts, and even religious lessons through television.<sup>251</sup> This opinion was approved in Egypt by al Ḥuwainī, who in his collection of questions to Al Albānī asked on the subject. Over the course of a 15-minute discussion on the issue, al Ḥuwainī asked on a wide range of theoretical subjects, attempting to find some aspect of television that might be allowed, without receiving any positive response from al Albānī.<sup>252</sup>

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250 “Radd al Sheikh Māzin al Sirsāwī al Qawī ‘alā Sheikh al Azhar,” YouTube video, 5:15, from Al Nas satellite channel, posted by “teacher4all.” 9 Oct 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vu-5n2lRWnw>.

251 Abu ‘Abd Allah al-Ajarī, *Al-Ibrāz li Aqwāl al-‘Ulama’ fī Ḥukm al Talfāz wa al Taṣwīr al Faḍā’i* (Riyadh: Dar al Imam al Mujaddid, 2005).

252 “Al Hūda wa al Nūr,” Recorded conversation between Muḥammad Naṣr al Dīn al Albānī and Abu

However, with the development of satellite channels as one of the main methods to spread the Salafī movement, these opinions quickly changed. In Saudi Arabia, ibn Uthaymayn, in a video recording of his religious opinions, he completely allowed photography and video recordings, unless they were subject to alteration.<sup>253</sup> In Egypt, Al Ḥuwainī now completely allows religious programming and the keeping of a television, as long as it does not present non-Islamic subjects. Muḥammad Ḥassān has remained on the fence and continues to present both opinions on the matter, however stating his preference for the permissibility of video and suggesting that those who still hold to the old interpretation are both ignorant and have a valid point.<sup>254</sup>

Secondly is in the approach to the *niqāb*. Traditionally, Salafis reject any attachment to the schools of jurisprudence, and consistently attack these schools and their major scholars as ignoring the clear evidence from the Qur'ān and the Sunna. However, once confronted with the issue Salafī preachers retreated from the original sources as well as the first three generations of Muslims, using the opinions of the schools of jurisprudence to justify their stance and sidelining any reference to their traditional methodology of the Qur'ān, Sunna, and opinions of the Salaf.

Finally, this malleability can be seen in the ruling of forbidding the dropping of the robes to the floor, or *Iṣbāl al Izār*. All of the Prophetic Hadiths on the subject clearly refer to the prohibition of dropping robes because it was an ancient Arabian sign of pride, and that Islam wished to remove these old societal differences to create a more equal society. Arguably, in modern society this is no longer a problem, and therefore the ruling should be changed. Abu Ishāq al Ḥuwainī, after being confronted with this fact, then abandons his methodology and ignores the clear evidence of the Sunna in favor of his

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Ishāq al Ḥuwainī, Tape 41, 20:00 – 35:00.

253 “Ḥukm al Taṣwīr l-ibn Uthaymīn,” YouTube video, 3:12, recorded mosque discussion, posted by “alothaimeen.” 7 Jul 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eN2zgo7MG5k>.

254 “Ḥukm al Taṣwīr fī al Islām lil Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān,” YouTube video, 7:09, from Al Rahma satellite channel, posted by “m3nani.” 30 May 2010, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_w4TT4VP1Gk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_w4TT4VP1Gk).

personal stance, citing the individual opinion of Shāfiʿī scholar Al Nawawī who saw the Ḥadīths against dropping robes as a general ban.<sup>255</sup>

### **Difference in Approach: Citizenship**

To provide a clearer picture of the different approaches taken between Salafis and modern reformers, this study shall use the example of citizenship. As presented in Chapter 3, Salafi scholars see the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims in general as one based upon religious status, rejecting the concept of citizenship. The Muslims, who have “opened” the country through a military invasion, have been determined by God as the natural leaders of the society, and they under no circumstances may have themselves subjected to a lower position. Non-Muslims or *Kuffār*, on the other hand, are considered to be under a protected or *Dhimma* status which although guarantees a state of peace with the Muslim army requires the payment of the *Jizya* and prevents them from holding higher political office or having control over affairs of those other than those of their co-religionists. The evidence given for this view is based upon a number of Qurʾānic verses in which God rejects the taking of non-believers as *Awliāʾ*, commonly translated in English as friends or helpers in place of Believers.<sup>256</sup>

This description is strongly literalist, and does not integrate the historical context, nor alternative legal opinions. Terms such as *Muslim*, *Dhimmī*, and *Kāfir* are presented without context, and exist only in their outward, linguistic state.

Modern reformers such as Fahmy Huweidy, Tāriq al Bishrī, and Muḥammad ʿImāra, however, use as their foundation not the Qurʾānic verses itself, but rather through viewing how these verses and subsequent Hadiths were applied in the Muslim community and by jurists. Huweidy begins by stating that *Dhimma* is a word not found in

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255 Al Atharī, *Samʿ al Laʾālī*, 53 – 67.

256 Qurʾān 3:28, “Let not the believers take for friends or helpers unbelievers rather than believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from God, except by way of precaution, that ye may guard yourselves from them...” Translated by Abdullah Yusuf ʿAlī.

“لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقْلَةً”



the Qur'ān but used by the Prophet Muḥammad for descriptive purposes, without any legal intention. He agrees that over time this term became the primary method through which non-Muslims living in Muslim lands were described in legal texts; however he strongly argues against this understanding by citing a number of statements from the Qur'ān, Sunna, the Salaf, and legal schools that stress equality, even between those of different religion. Finally, Huweidy also cites the historical context in which this approach is placed.<sup>257</sup> This opinion is repeated and elaborated on by 'Imāra.<sup>258</sup>

Al Bishrī takes a similar stance, however ignoring much of the religious discussion and moving directly towards a presentation of historical circumstances. Muslims and Christians in Egypt have in his opinion consistently worked together as one, creating a shared identity. First nurtured under the rule of Muḥammad 'Alī, this relationship has developed into the modern concept of citizenship and become one of the most important aspects of national identity. In his introduction, he argues against those who cite Qur'ānic verses and states that if such a relationship was contradictory to the foundational principles of Islam then scholars and the society would have risen against it, which clearly was not the case.<sup>259</sup>

As a result of these approaches, the three reformers cited here agree that Muslims and non-Muslims in the modern nation-state can be recognized as citizens, equal under the law and sharing both rights and responsibilities. There is no obstacle to a non-Muslim reaching a high political office such as that of President, as the office of the Egyptian President is not to act as the *Imām* or *Wālī* in a traditional Qur'ānic sense, but is rather one part of the national leadership structure. The leader is freely chosen by the will of the population, subject to election, and works in coordination with the society as a whole towards achieving the nation's goals.

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257 Fahmy Huweidy, *Muwāṭinūn lā Dhimmīyyūn* (Cairo: Dar al Shorouk, 1999) 110 – 116.

258 Muḥammad 'Imāra, *Ukdhūbat al Iṭṭihād al Dīnī fī Misr* (Cairo: Dar al Salam, 2000).

259 Ṭāriq al Bishrī, *Al Muslimūn wa al Aqbāt fī Iṭār al Jamā'a al Waṭaniyya* (Cairo: Al Hay'a al 'Amma lil Kitab, 1981).

## CONCLUSIONS

### What is Salafism?

There is little information to suggest the existence of a group known as Salafis anytime from the outset of Islamic history until well into the modern era. The word Salafi has been used by countless Sunni writers in an attempt to provide a connection to the beloved first three generations of Muslims, providing for them a form of legitimacy for their own thoughts through a connection to the beginnings of Islam. Whether in debates with theological foes, or simply in legal discussions, this term could be used to defeat opponents, avoid accusations of innovation and therefore allow a wider audience for their ideas. Modern groups calling themselves Salafis have gone through the same process of legitimization, searching through the annals of Islamic works to find almost anyone whom they can attach to their line of thought. Unfortunately, however, most Western and even Muslim writers tend to agree with the modern Salafi interpretation that this is a group of ancient puritans that have existed from the beginning, following what they feel is the true version of Islam juxtaposed to either philosophers or liberal jurists and reformers.

What is clear is that throughout Islamic history there have been a number of movements that call Muslims to reform such as that of Ibn Taymiyya, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, Ibn Fūdi, Shāh Walī Allāh al Dahlawī, and those in modern Saudi Arabia and Egypt. These movements, however, are not based upon abstract philosophical trends in the religion but rather entirely upon the particular historical and social circumstances in which they developed. True, they all center around one common factor: an apprehension to *bid’a* or innovation in the religion and the desire to cleanse society from these innovations. However, each group interpreted the influence of *bid’a* and the solution to this problem in entirely different ways. The movements of Ibn Fūdi and Shāh Walī Allāh al Dahlawī were based strongly around Sufism, while Sayyid Aḥmad Khān had Sufi beginnings but eventually developed into his claim to be the Mahdi. Both of these concepts are completely rejected by modern-day Salafis.

In the Egyptian context, modern Salafism is a movement started by a number of young Egyptians in the 1970s. Before this time other movements existed such as the *Anṣār Al Sunna* and the *Jamā' Islāmiyya*, but these movements worked largely in cooperation with the state and differed fundamentally in terms of methodology from the modern movements.<sup>260</sup>

In their lifetime, these individuals witnessed fundamental shifts in Egyptian society to allow free education for all citizens and a social network that would allow them and their peers to enter for the first time the urban setting and enhance their social status. Upon their arrival in the cities, however, they would witness the failures of Nasserism and the Open Door policy of the Sadat regime to provide true development and advancement for the nation. As the problems of society continued to increase they then turned to the only recourse that they had at their direct disposal given their background: a deeper attachment to religion. At the time the historical setting also was calling for a return to religion. The destruction of the Arab armies at the hands of Israel in 1967 and the interpretation of this defeat showed a large number of Egyptians that Islam was the only answer.

Unfortunately, the traditional religious institutions and in particular Al Azhar had come largely under state control and were tied directly to the politics of the regime, rendering them to a secondary position in the social structure. Those in the organized religious opposition, the Muslim Brotherhood, were violently pursued by the government and subject to imprisonment and in some cases torture and execution at the hands of the authorities. Therefore, there was a need to seek an alternative religious interpretation. Some of these influences would come domestically in the form of radical preachers such as 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Kishk who would speak out against the government's oppressive practices, or Sayyid Sābiq whose works sought to redefine Islamic Law along the lines of the literal interpretation of the Qur'ān and Sunna. However, the majority of their influences would come from the preachers of Saudi Arabia and those who were directly

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<sup>260</sup> Shalāṭa, 201-210.

supported by the Saudi government such as Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī, 'Abd Allah bin Bāz, or Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Uthaymayn.

The oil boom of the 1970s allowed all the governments in the Gulf States an unprecedented amount of financial assets which allowed them to publish books, tapes, and other materials from their preachers with the desire to increase their influence and promote their interpretation of the religion, particularly in Saudi Arabia which sought to spread its Wahhabi interpretation of Islam. The millions of Egyptian workers and students who would in the subsequent years travel to the Gulf to take advantage of these new sources of income would be heavily influenced by this campaign, with many Salafī preachers spending long amounts of time in the country and continuing to make regular trips to countries such as Saudi Arabia for religious lessons. Many Egyptians were taught in Saudi Arabia that this new wealth was a sign of God's acceptance of the puritanical doctrine, and that if they were to remove innovation back home, they too could see worldly benefits.

As they returned to their homeland, these Egyptians would begin to preach their new message, pushed forward by the continued growth of problems in Egyptian society, the failure of traditional Islamic institutions to handle these problems, and the financial backing of the Gulf. Keeping their campaign primarily in the rural areas at first and using popular methods of communication such as cassette tapes, the movement remained largely untouched by the regime.

At the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the Salafis had spread their message into the cities and, with the help of new mediums of communication such as satellite television and the Internet, were now able to reach the widest audiences in their history. The government then began to see this advancement as a threat, and took measures to crack down but political circumstances resulting in the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 Revolution would not allow these restrictions to continue.

Rather, these events would see the Salafi movement enter politics and become one of the most powerful political blocks in the country, driving the debates that will significantly impact the future composition of Egyptian society.

Ultimately, this is not a movement simply imported from the Gulf or part of a general turn to textualism in Islam. Rather it is the result of local historical, cultural, economic, and overall social circumstances that pushed individuals to seek religious solutions to the problems they saw around them. Perhaps the clearest representation of the movement in Egypt was given by The Arab newspaper when it called Salafism:

"أقرب إلى الأفيونة التي تمتص حالة الاحتقان لدى الشارع المصري وتأخذ من مساحة الرضا والاستسلام ."

"Close to the opium that draws out the state of congestion and confusion in the Egyptian street and takes from the space of self-gratitude and surrender."<sup>261</sup>

## Methodology

The methodology of the Salafi movement in Egypt is one based upon "selective literalism," with members attempting to stay as close as possible to a strict interpretation of the Qur'ān and Sunna in the topics and issues they choose. However, there are many circumstances in which this is not possible, and the movement is forced to adapt. For example, once many of the Salafi preachers returned from their time in the Gulf, they quickly realized that the harsh, uncompromising dialogue traditionally presented in the mosques of Saudi Arabia and many Salafi works was not attractive to an Egyptian audience. Therefore, there was a need to introduce elements of spirituality. Although strongly against Sufism in general, Salafis integrated elements of Sufism such as the purification of the heart, *tawakkul* or reliance upon God, to even stating that those with the highest levels of faith cry upon hearing the Qur'ān or about the tribulations witnessed

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261 "The Islamic Movements in the Arab Nation." Special addition to the publication of *The Arab*, edition 7588, 22 March 2009, p. 25.

by the Prophet Muḥammad during his lifetime.<sup>262</sup>

The issues chosen by the Salafis are those that deal heavily with those of acts of worship and common morality, agreed-upon by the majority of their audiences. Many of the discussions and debates proposed by the Salafi movement remain highly abstract such as how one should love God or the moral merits of the Companions. This is done to both avoid internal conflict and maintain popularity. When the Salafis venture away from this discourse and begin to discuss pertinent legal issues or societal problems, however, conflict ensues.

### **Relationship with Classical Islam**

In their interpretation of Islamic Law, the positions of Salafis are not a significant departure from the classical religious opinions, particularly its stricter interpretations. This has led analysts such as Ḥassan al Saqqāf to classify them legally as simply modern Hanbalis.<sup>263</sup> What is important to note, however, is that this attachment to classical approaches to the religion completely ignores the modern circumstances in which problems appear. In politics, for example, the interpretation of the just Quraish male Khalīfa or Imam ignores the modern development of the nation state system. In economics, Muslims simply paying their mandatory alms taxes or gathering donations from citizens to cover a lack of US foreign aid shows a lack of understanding of even the most simple modern financial concepts. Additionally, in stark opposition to the Islamic legal tradition, the starting point from analysis was not reality, rather theoretical situations provided by their sources that they then force on reality.

### **Attempts at Dialogue and Reconciliation**

Particularly since the Revolution and the entry of the Salafi movement into the political realm, there have been a number of attempts to reconcile the opinions of the Salafi movement with that of other groups in the society, including liberals and

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262 Al Burhāmī, *Faql al Ghani*, 32-33.

263 Ḥassan bin ‘Alī al Saqqāf, *Al Salafīyya al Wahābiyya* (Beirut: Dar al Mizān, 2005) 20.

Christians. Newspaper editor Khālīd Ṣalāh appeared a number of times on satellite channels alongside Muḥammad Ḥassān, claiming to bridge the gaps between Salafis and liberals,<sup>264</sup> and even a group of wealthy Salafis invited citizens to meetings at a local coffee chain.<sup>265</sup> These movements have largely failed, with the Salafis refusing to compromise and claiming that their stances on issues are not personal opinions but rather aspects of religious doctrine. This study therefore concludes that dialogue and reconciliation with the Salafi movement will be possible once the Salafis are prepared to begin engaging other elements of Egyptian society as equals with different opinions, and not as subjects to be preached to and saved from their innovations. At this point, they could be brought in as a constructive aspect of the national dialogue, using their grassroots and rural support to enact positive societal change.

What does act as a positive point is the malleability of the Salafi methodology to the point that, when needed, preachers are willing to forego aspects of their methodology to adopt opinions that will see them remain relevant in the societal discourse, with only a few such as Wagdy Ghuneim remaining firm in their opinions. This can be seen particularly in their approach to democracy, elections, political protests, and the *niqāb*. This openness to adapt represents one of the most interesting aspects of the Salafi methodology, has kept them popular to the point of this study, and arguably could continually be used as a way out of confrontation, leading to the moderation of the group's opinions.

### **Position of Al Azhar and the Future**

Many commentators in Egypt have claimed that the Salafi movement will begin to dissipate once the traditional Islamic institutions such as Al Azhar return to their previous place as leaders in the Muslim World. After the institution's legal and financial independence from the political regime, which according to them was the reason for its

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264 "Liqā' al Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥassān fī al 'As'ila al Ṣab'a ma' Khālīd Ṣalāh," YouTube video, 1:03:50, from Al Nahar satellite channel, posted by "Pinncawwy." 13 Feb 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EckdjZVAHxA>.

265 "Salafīo Costa," Facebook page, accessed 26 Apr 2012, <http://www.facebook.com/salafyocosta>.

fall in the first place, the renewed strength will allow Al Azhar to stand against this growing tide of Salafism.

What this viewpoint does not take into account is that aspects of the Salafi methodology have become standard at Al Azhar itself. A number of professors in both religious and secular departments actively support the Salafi movement, with some major speakers mentioned in this study as Māzin Al Sirsāwī and ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz reaching the level of department head and others such as Muḥammad al Saghīr, even participating on panels to alter the religious curriculum taught to Azhar primary and secondary students. Many members of the Salafi movement such as Yāssir al Burhāmī and Muḥammad Ḥassān hold degrees from Al Azhar. Additionally, in public lessons even those teachers considered to be against the Salafi movement in the areas of Jurisprudence and Hadith promote many of the same approaches as those of Salafis, attaching to a strict interpretation of the roots of Islamic heritage and seriously questioning any attempt at modernization.<sup>266</sup> Most students of the university have come to embody this ideology, and the Salafi movement continues to hold a number of popular speaking events inside the Al Azhar University campuses both at the main facilities in Cairo as well as its regional branches. Therefore, this study does not believe that the moderation of the Salafi movement will come from the development or independence of Al Azhar.

Two things alone will result in the alteration of the Salafi movement. The first will be removing the economic and social conditions in which the Salafi movement thrives. Rural development, the enhanced quality of education, and an overall improvement of the economic situation faced by average Egyptians. The second, as implied by Wagdy Ghoneim, will be the introduction of Salafis into the political mainstream. Being forced to deal with the everyday realities of governance will require the Salafi movement to slowly abandon their discourse of abstract discussions and either drastically change their approach to adapt or risk collapse.

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266 This point and its connection to an evaluation of the curriculum taught at Al Azhar University is one intended to be elaborated on in further research.



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